AN

Historical Dissertation

UPON THE

THEBEAN LEGION,

Plainly proving it to be Fabulous.

BY

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LONDON,

Printed for *R. Bentley*, in *Russel-street* in *Covent-Garden*, 1696.

11/a/43

Mg x 23
D84

TO THE

Right Honourable

My LORD

MOUTHERMER,

Eldeſt Son to the

Right Honourable

The Earl of

MOUNTAGUE,

Maſter of the *Wardrobe*, and one of his Majeſties moſt Honourable Privy Council.

My Lord,

I *Could not deny my ſelf the Pleaſure of Dedicating this little Book to your Lordſhip, having the Honour of ſeeing you*

twice or three times a Week, but never without being Charm'd with you Behaviour, and your many Excellent Qualities.

The ill Practices of this Age, have so far infected the Noblemen, and made them so solicitous of their private Interests, that it is to be feared, we may live to see those times return again upon us, when Mens worth was measured by their Riches, and Persons of Quality were proud of their ignorance.

Ingenium quondam fuerat pretiosius auro,
At nunc barbaria est grandis, habere nihil.

One cannot without grief see so many Young Noblemen, the Hopes of the Church, and Flower of the State, spend the best of their Years in Pleasures and Idleness.

And tho' they have no Noble Qualities which can Entitle them to the Worlds respect, yet they still hope to recommend themselves to their esteem by their Noble Birth, their Splendid Living, and the flattery of Sycophants.

But you, my Lord, are far from thinking that the advantages of Nature and Fortune can make amends for all other Defects, or ought

ought to incline you to deſpiſe the Study of Curious Arts and Polite Learning.

The conſtant Application, by which you improve thoſe rare Talents you brought into the World with you, the great attention you give to the Inſtructions of your Maſters, the pleaſure you take in having your Judgment informed, and the Impreſſion which right Notions make upon you, do clearly diſcover the juſt Opinion you have of what things are truly worthy of Honour.

— Tu ſola animos mentemque peruris
Gloria, te viridem videt, immunemq; Senectæ
Thamiſis in ripa ſtantem, juveneſq; Vocantem. *Val. Flac. Arg. L. 1. Phaſidos.*

As the Roman *Noblemen uſed to return from* Athens *and* Marſeilles, *laden with the Spoils of* Greece, *and perfected in the choiceſt Studies, that they might be qualified for ſitting and ſpeaking in the Senate; doubtleſs, My Lord, you are moved by the ſame Spring, when you conſider, that the Parliament (to which your Birth will one Day call you) is the moſt Auguſt Aſſembly in the World, whoſe greatneſs was never perhaps ſo well underſtood*

ſtood as ſince this preſent War, when we ſee all Europe *waiting upon their Conſultations, and that their* Winter *Reſolutions Govern the Actions of the* Summer.

How happy are you, My Lord, in a Wiſe and a kind Father, who has added to ſo ſolid a Judgment, ſo great Experience of the World, who not thinking it ſufficient to give you the ableſt Maſters in all Sciences, reſerves the inſpection of your Studies and Education to to his own fondneſs and care.

And how Happy is your Father in ſuch a Son, who makes ſo good uſe of his Admonitions and Example; and by the Bloſſoms of your Spring, promiſe him ſo fruitful an Autumn.

But that which ſtrikes me moſt in you, My Lord, is, the obſerving, as often as I have the Honour of waiting on you, that the pleaſure you take in ſound Literature and gentile Studies, which would otherwiſe be your chief delight, do yield to your ſtronger Love of Virtue and Honeſty.

What may we not expect from that regard you have for your Preceptors, that Complaiſance to your Equals, and Courteſie to your Inferiours, the acknowledgments you pay unawares to thoſe whoſe Duty is to ſerve

you

you, your generous Inclinations, your ſweet Nature, your Modeſty and Affability, which Charm every Body that comes near you, the perfect Obedience and profound Reſpect, which you pay to your Father on all occaſions, and above all your Religion and Piety, which added to all your other rare Qualities, ſhew you to be the Care of Heaven, which ſeldom or never beſtows ſo many Excellencies on the ſame Perſon.

——— ſparguntur in Omnes. Claudian.
In te mixta fluunt, & quæ diviſa beatos
Efficiunt, collecta tenes;

I think, My Lord, I may very well be allowed to quote Latin Authors to you, ſince you already underſtand their Language; and its needleſs to ſpeak of the Progreſs you have made in the French, *after having ſeen an Anſwer which Mr. de St.* Euremont *wrote to a Letter you ſent him, whereby it appears how full of admiration he was at your Wit, the Correctneſs of your Style, and juſtneſs of your Thoughts, and when Mr. de St* Euremont *has decided ſo much in your Favour, it's better than if your Lord-*

Lordship had the Approbation of the whole French *Academy.* I beseech God, to confirm you more and more in his Love and Fear, and fill you with the Blessings of his Holy Spirit. *I am,*

My LORD,

Your most Humble

and most Obliged Servant,

John Dubourdieu.

AN Hiſtorical Diſſertation UPON THE MARTYRDOM OF THE Thebean Legion.

CHAP. I.

The Occaſion of this Eſſay.

THE Duke of *Schomberg*, whom I had the Honour to ſerve as Chaplain, arrived at *Turin* the 18*th* of *July*, 1691. He found the State of Affairs there in a bad Poſture, and the People in a great Conſternation. The *French* had lately Fortified *Carmagnole*. *Coni* was Beſieg'd and given over for loſt. *Monſieur*

ſieur *la Hoguette* had forced the Paſſages of the Valley of *Aoſte*, which gave him entrance into the Country of *Verceil* and the Frontiers of the *Milaneſe*. Our Army inſtead of making ſome motion to diſturb the Enemy, Incamped upon the Deſcent of *Mountcallier*, being Spectators of the waſte and burning of the Plains below. *Turin* dreaded every hour being Inveſted. There was an univerſal fear; and the retreat of the Princeſſes to *Verceil* added yet more to the terrour of the Inhabitants. The Favourers of *France* gave out publickly that his Royal Highneſs would unavoidably be ſtripp'd, this Campaigne, of all his Territories, and that he had no way left, but to ſubmit to the King's mercy.

Certain it is, that without that firmneſs and greatneſs of Soul which his Royal Highneſs ſhewed on this occaſion, all had then been loſt; and though the beginning of his Reign ſeems to prognoſticate a ſeries of Heroick Actions, yet this part of his Hiſtory will be none of the leſs Illuſtrious. *Emmanuel Philibert*, oppreſſed during the Wars between *Charles* the V. and *Francis* the I. ſunk at laſt under the weight of his Misfortunes. He had the weakneſs to take upon him the Name of St. *Mark*'s Son; and that he might be aſſiſted by the *Venetians*, he Sacrificed to that Republick the precedency he had in all the Courts of *Europe*. The Affairs of his now Royal Highneſs were almoſt as deſperate: Nevertheleſs a manly and undaunted Air did always appear on the Face, and in the meen of this young *Hero*. Neither the Propoſals of *France*, joined

joined with *Italian* craft, the bad Condition of his Troops, the exhauſting of his Treaſury, nor the Enemies Army Incamping in the Plain of *Milleſleurs*, a League diſtant from *Turin*, could ever raiſe in him the leaſt degenerate Thought. And it may be ſaid that his Conſtancy and ſteddineſs bore up againſt his ill Fortune, and that himſelf put a ſtop to the deſperate Condition of his Affairs.

The Duke of *Schomberg* came to him in this dangerous juncture; and did by his Example and Counſels confirm his Royal Highneſſes's Reſolutions. Two or three days after his Arrival, waiting on the Prince on Horſe back to obſerve the *French* Army, which had then paſs'd the River *Pô*, and was incamped between *Carmagnolle* and *Mountcallier*; Duke *Schomberg* ſpeaking High-German to one of the Guards of that Nation, his Royal Highneſs declared his deſire to Learn that Language, adding that he had attempted it two or three times, but was always diſcouraged by the difficulty he found in it; which gave occaſion to Duke *Schomberg* to offer his aſſiſtance, and to be his Maſter. The Prince reply'd, that others might Inſtruct him in the *German* Tongue, but that it was the Art of War that he deſired to Learn of him. A viſible change was ſoon perceived in the State of Affairs. Our Infantry which was poſted on the riſing Ground of *Mountcallier*, came down to the Foot of the Hill. Our Horſe ſtretched on the Plain where the Enemies were Incamped, and cauſed the Siege of *Coni* to

be raiſed, and forced *Catinat* to retire, which freed the City of *Turin* from their Allarm.

The Wiſdom and Valour of his Royal Highneſs were juſtly praiſed. And publick Prayers were made to bleſs God for having averted the Storm, and removed in a great meaſure the ſad apprehenſions they had lain under. And thus far all things went right. But to ſpeak freely, I could not ſee without grief, a part of that Incenſe, the Smoak whereof ought wholly to have aſcended to the Glory of the Lord of Hoſts, burnt to the Honour of the *Thebean* Souldiers. I was preſent at my return from the Compaign, at a Sermon Preached by a Jeſuite in the Church of the Old Colledge, on the Holy-day kept in Honour of the *Thebean* Souldiers, *Solutor*, *Adventor* and *Octavius*, to whoſe Memory this Church is Dedicated; and to whom the City of *Turin* pays veneration as to their Patrons: *O People of* Turin (ſaid the Preacher above a hundred times) *O people of* Turin, *bleſs your deliverers! Bleſs theſe Sacred Martyrs who watch for your ſafety, and whoſe Merits and Prayers* have preſerved your City, your Families, and Eſtates. I ſaw afterwards all the Religious Orders, and the Confraternities or Brotherhoods come to the Feet of the Altars, where the Reliques of theſe Souldiers are depoſited, to receive, what the Romiſh-Church calls, the Bleſſing.

This occaſioned the firſt deſire I had to examine the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, as ſoon as I could have both time and Books neceſſary for that purpoſe. And that which further moved

moved me to do it, was my being afterwards an Eye-witneſs of the Church-Service which the Magiſtrates of the Town ordered to be performed on the 20*th* of *Jan.* 1693. for the diſcharge of a Vow they had made in Honour of the *Thebean* Souldiers, which, by reaſon of ſome difficulties, they had not been able ſooner to perform.

The Reliques of the *Thebean* Souldiers were ſet in the Church of the Jeſuits, upon a Throne covered with a Golden Brocado, illuminated with an infinite number of White-wax-tapers. The Archbiſhop accompany'd with the whole Chapter, came and Officiated in his Pontifical Habit. The Court was preſent at this Solemn Service, and adored the Urn in which theſe Sacred Corpſes were (for ſo they are Styl'd by the Jeſuit, who Printed a Relation of the Ceremony) *Indi ſopravenne la Corte, e s'eſpoſe alla publica Adorazione l' Urna de' Sacri Corpi.* Ferrer. p. 205. All the Orders, the Monks and Fryers, all the Confraternities, the White, Blue, Black, Red, and Gray Penitents, came in Proceſſion to adore the Sacred Shrine, which contains the Fate and Hopes of their City. Towards the Evening it was carried about from the Church on Mens ſhoulders under a rich Canopy of State, ſupported by four Perſons of the firſt Quality. The Canopy was attended by twelve Knights of St. *Mauritius* and of St. *Lazarus*, appointed by their Order for that performance. The moſt part of the Nobility and Gentry of the Town followed with lighted Wax-Torches, and almoſt all the People, of what Rank and Condition ſoever, flocked thither to

Worſhip the pretended Reliques of their Protectors.

I withdrew my ſelf, not a little concern'd to ſee the Devotion of all ſorts of People, applied to the Honour of the Saints, when it ſhould have been wholly directed to the Glory of God, the only Author of their Deliverance, and preſent ſafety. And my grief was heightned, by a Senſe of gratitude to a People that had ſhewed ſo much good Nature to me a Stranger, and a Proteſtant Miniſter; which Character, though odious to all the reſt of *Italy*, yet was in nothing prejudicial to me during two Years that I Preached there. Though I confeſs the Kindneſſes I received were owing moſt to the great eſteem they had for the Duke of *Schomberg*, and eſpecially to the great regard they have there for the *Engliſh* Nation, whoſe Valour and Power are as rightly underſtood there at this time, as in the reſt of *Europe*. But I cannot, without, ingratitude forbear here giving to the Inhabitants of *Turin* their due, which is, that they are extreamly Courteous and Civil to Strangers, and partake of the Politeneſs of the Court of *Savoy*, which hath been for a long time lookt upon as one of the moſt Poliſhed and Civilized, and where Converſation is juſtly tempered, between the Liberties of *Paris*, and the Reſtraint of *Florence*.

Since then it is neither out of unthankfulneſs, nor for want of reſpect for the City of *Turin*, but out of meer Love to Truth, and as a Duty incumbent on my Function, that I do Attack their Patrons in this Work of mine, no body I hope

will

will take any offence at my deſign. Morever, as this whole buſineſs depends on Proofs; if they are frivolous, the *Thebean* Souldiers will ſtill peaceably enjoy the Glory of their Martyrdom; but if they prove good, it will be ſome Service to have undeceived the World in this matter. Now I deſire this Juſtice may be done me, that my Thoughts may not be miſinterpreted, nor a conſtruction put upon them, which I do not deſign. For I know ſome Proteſtants do make uſe of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion* to back ſome other queſtions, which are not at all to my preſent Deſign, nor proper for one in my circumſtances to meddle with. Thoſe who are acquainted with my Temper will believe me in this point. And I have always applyed to my ſelf this wiſe ſaying, *Exul tace.*

CHAP. II.

That both the Court and City of Turin *have been Ancient Worſhippers of the* Thebean *Souldiers.*

GReat Honour and Reverence have been paid for a long time at *Turin* to the *Thebean* Souldiers. And the general Opinion is, that they have ſignaliz'd themſelves there by a great number of Miracles. *Hyacinto Ferrero*, a Jeſuit, relates, that by their means, *Conſtantine* the Great

got that memorable Victory which opened him the way both to *Rome* and to the Empire. He ſaith, that when he conſiders that the Battel was Fought in the Neighbourhood of *Turin*, he cannot but believe that the Flying Squadron which was then ſeen in the Air, and cry'd to *Conſtantine*, *n'andiamo a ſoccorſo di Coſtantino*, were thoſe *Thebean* Souldiers ſlain by *Maximian*, who were Arm'd by Heav'n on this occaſion; to cauſe the true Chriſtian Religion to Triumph, which that Tyrant had endeavoured to deſtroy. If after the riſe of *Conſtantine* to the Empire, Paganiſm began to fall, and if the Progreſs of the Goſpel in *Turin* went ſo ſucceſsfully on, and with ſo much rapidity, that in a ſhort time ſeveral Churches, and a Biſhop with a numerous Clergy, were ſeen there: *All this*, adds the ſame Author, *was owing to the Blood, Miracles, and Prayers of the* Thebean *Souldiers.* He relates afterwards two or three Adventures, in which the *Thebean* Souldiers have viſibly ſhewed their watchful care over *Turin*, and how intent they were to procure Bleſſings from Heaven upon this City. He ſaith, that the Romiſh Religion was in extream danger at *Turin* at the time when the Famous *Claudius* Biſhop of that See endeavoured to aboliſh the Adoration of the Croſs, and of the Sacred Images, and the Worſhipping of Martyrs: And likewiſe ſeveral Years after, when *L'Ediguieres* entred into *Piedmont* with an Army of *Calviniſts*, but that the *Thebean* Souldiers, by the Merits of their Martyrdom, and the Efficacy of their Prayers, removed the danger, and preſerved that Religion

Carolo Hyacinto Ferrero vita de' primi Protettori, &c. pag. 72.

Ferrero pag. 76. Tutto ſi deve al Sangue a' Miracoli, alle preghie re de' noſtri Benigniſſimi Protettori.

Ferrero pag 76.

Religion there. But here is ſomething yet more wonderful. The ſame Jeſuite relates, that a General of the Emperour *Charles* the V. beſieged *Turin* in the Year 1537. and had taken it infallibly by the ſecret Intelligences he had there, had he cauſed his Souldiers to Scale it at any other place than that which is call'd now the Baſtion of St. *George*. But that, unluckily for him, the Reliques of the *Thebean* Souldiers reſted then near the ſame Baſtion; and that when his Men went to get up, they were frighted by the Sparkling Arms and threatning looks of theſe Holy Martyrs, who miraculouſly appeared for the defence of the City.

Ferrero. pag. 131. *Diſeſero in un pericolo eſtremo il Principe e la Città dall' Arme et dall' Ereſia de' Calviniſti.*

And perhaps Cardinal *de la Rovere* ſpoke of this Miracle in a Sermon which he Preached before *Emmanuel Philibert*, in a certain Solemnity in Honour of the *Thebean* Souldiers. *Theſe are the Saints, Great Prince*, ſaid he, *who have preſerved to you your Loyal City of* Turin, *and have averted from it the deſolations of War. Theſe are the Saints, O City of* Turin! *who are the Towers and Bulwarks which have been and ſhall be thy Defence, to the end that thou mayſt remain ſtill a peaceable and a Triumphant Place to thy Prince. Grant us, O ye glorious Saints, that we may always cry out with joy and Devotion, Facta eſt Pax in virtute veſtra & abundantia in Turribus veſtris.*

Il Card. de Rovere Queſti ſono quei ſanti liquali, Sereniſſimo Principe vi hanno reſtituita intiera queſta fideliſſima Città veſtra, &c.

Charles Emmanuel the Firſt, could not poſſibly have given a greater Teſtimony of his Devotion to thoſe Saints, than by freely giving up to the *Valeſians* the Town of St. *Mauricius*, and other places

places which they had Uſurped from him during the Wars between his Grandfather and *Francis* the Firſt; upon Condition, that the *Valeſians* ſhould give him leave to Convey to *Turin* the Corps of St. *Mauricius*, Chief of the *Thebean Legion*, one of whoſe Arms he had already gotten out of *Bohemia*, whither it was Tranſported in the Year of 1250. by King *Ottocarus* the Fifth. And 'twas perhaps about that time that St. *Mauricius* his Lance, ſpoken of by *Chromer*, was brought to *Cracovia*, where it lyes yet expoſed to publick Veneration. I queſtion very much, whether *France* would now give up *Pignerol* to the Houſe of *Savoy*, though that Houſe ſhould proffer in Exchange *il Santo ſudario*, or the Holy Shroud, notwithſtanding the great Zeal it ptetends to have for the Romiſh Religion, and though this Holy Shroud is look't upon as the moſt Precious Relique of that Religion. But *Charles Emmanuel*, in the Devotion he had for the *Thebean* Souldiers, did nothing but tread in the ſteps of *Emmanuel Philibert* his Father. When the Reliques of theſe Saints were conveyed from the Church of the Bleſſed Virgin into that of the Jeſuites, where they do reſt to this Day, *Emmanuel Philibert* honoured the Ceremony with his preſence, and was at a great expence towards the Magnificence of it. And this wiſe Prince, knowing well that Saints without Power are ordinarily neglected, and that the giving of Indulgences is a means for them to gain a good Reputation, obtained a conſiderable ſhare of them from *Gregory* the Thirteenth, for all thoſe who by

Cromerus de Reb. Pol. l. 3.

Offerings

Offerings and Prayers ſhould ſhew their Devotion to the *Thebean* Souldiers. His Bull was obtained in the Year 1574. And the Pope expreſſes in it, that he grants theſe Indulgences upon conſideration of the ſingular Devotion, which both the Duke of *Savoy* and the People of *Turin* do pay to the *Thebean* Souldiers.

Bull Greg. 13. ob eximiam devotionem quam erga eoſdem ſanctos dilectus Filius Emmanuel Phil. Dux ſabaudiæ, & univerſus Civitatis Taurinenſis Populus gerunt, &c.

Charles Emmanuel had ſo great a Zeal for the glory of the *Thebean* Souldiers, that he imparted to *Spain* ſome of their Reliques, to the intent they might partake of their Merits and Intereceſſion. He charged *Charles Broglia*, Archbiſhop of *Turin*, with his Orders concerning it, as appears by the Copy of the Certificate, which, according to the Cuſtom of the Roman Church, was put up with the Reliques, and was Signed in the Month of *September* 1603. This Archbiſhop ſaith in the ſame Certificate, that he himſelf hath taken a Rib of St. *Mauricius*'s Body, one of St. *Secundus*'s great Toes, three Bones of the Fingers of *Solutor*, *Adventor*, and *Octavius*, and a Leg-bone of one of St. *Gerion*'s Companions. *Charles Emmanuel* cauſed theſe Reliques to be put in a Silver-gilt Shrine, all ſet with precious Stones, and diſpatch'd *Leonardo Roncaſſio* his firſt Secretary of State, to preſent it to *Margaret* of *Auſtria* Queen of *Spain*.

All theſe things plainly ſhew the great reſpect and Devotion, that both the Court and City of *Turin* have long paid to the Martyrs of the *Thebean Legion*.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

That it is worth ones Labour to examine the Paſſion of the Thebean *Souldiers, though it paſſes for current amongſt all ſorts of Chriſtian Societies.*

WE ſhall now endeavour to prove, that there were never any ſuch Perſons as theſe *Thebean* Souldiers, and that the Relation of their Martyrdom, ſaid to have been writ by *Eucherius*, Biſhop of *Lions*, is altogether falſe and Counterfeit.

Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante Trita Solo.

This matter is quite new, and was never handled, for ought I know, by any Author before. Though after ſo many Books written, there is, one would think, hardly any thing in Eccleſiaſtical Antiquity that hath eſcaped the ſtrict Examination of judicious Criticks; ſome Learned Men indeed have ſuſpected the Paſſion of the *Thebean Legion* to have been a Fiction, but none of them had the Courage to oppoſe an Opinion which they ſaw ſo Univerſally eſtabliſhed.

If general Approbation might be admitted as a Proof, there would be ſcarce any Opinion more Probable

Probable than that of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, if we conſider the great number of grave and Learned Authors who have all aſſerted it as an undoubted matter of Fact. *Rome*, *Geneva*, the *Lutherans*, the Church of *England*, and generally all Chriſtian Societies have given Credit to the Hiſtory of this *Legion*; and that, no doubt, upon account of the Honour which they imagined the Martyrdom of it did to the Chriſtian Religion, by the wonderfulneſs of the Action, the greatneſs of Soul, and the Glorious Characters of the Perſons that ſuffered.

John Lewis Fabritius relates the Example of the *Thebean Legion*, in his Learned Diſſertation concerning the juſt Limits of humane obedience, in order to eſtabliſh this ſo important a Maxim in Morality; That we ought always to ſide with God, whenever there is more certainty and evidence in the Prohibitions of God, than in the Ordinances of Princes. Archbiſhop *Uſher*, a Man of ſo vaſt a knowledge in Eccleſiaſtical Antiquity, fell into the ſame common opinion: And the Martyrdom of the *Thebean* Souldiers, making for him in his Book of Regal Power, he lays as great a ſtreſs upon it, as if it were a thing of unqueſtionable certainty. The famous *Grotius* ſpeaks twice of it in his Learned Book, *de jure Pacis & Belli*, and makes uſe of it, as that which of all things he leaſt doubted the Truth of. And though ſince the death of theſe two great Men, the exactneſs of Criticiſm upon the Works of the Fathers hath been much improved, yet the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion* is ſtill

Grot. lib. 1. c. 2. & Cap. 11. 11, 12.

cryed

cryed up amongſt thoſe other popular Errours the World is fallen in Love with. *Edward Fuller*, Biſhop of *Gloceſter*, hath made it one of the Ornaments of a very fine Treatiſe, compoſed by him upon the great Deſign of Chriſtianity, which is the Sanctification of Men. And Doctor *Cave*, one of the Prebends of *Windſor*, brings in, with great great Pomp, the Hiſtory of this *Legion* in that Work of his, in which he gives us a very fine Repreſentation both of the Religion and Manners of the Primitive Chriſtians.

Edward Fuller, the Deſ. of Chriſtian. Sect. 3. *c.* 16. *pag.* 187.

Dr. Cave, Primitive Chriſt. part 3. *c.* 4. *pag.* 331.

There is ſcarcely, I confeſs, any Divine who hath out-done him in the Study of Church Hiſtory, as may appear by the great Volume he hath given us upon the Writings of the Fathers. Now how great a reſpect ſoever we have for the extraordinary merit of theſe Learned Authors, we ought to reject their Errours, be they never ſo Ancient. There is no preſcription againſt Truth; and a long prepoſſeſſion gives no right at all to Errour. *I have ſeen*, ſaith one of our Old Writers, *the Birth of many Miracles in my time, and though they no ſooner ſaw the Light, but they were ſtifled, we do however foreſee the courſe they would have taken, had they happened to have lived to their full Age. For the main buſineſs is to find out out the end of the thread, then you may wind as much as you pleaſe; and there is a greater diſtance from nothing to the leaſt thing that may be, than there is from that leaſt to the greateſt that can be imagined. A private Errour firſt cauſeth a publick one; and then that publick Errour occaſions other private ones. Thus the*

whole

whole work goes on, patch'd up and faſhioned by a ſucceſſion of ſeveral hands; ſo that the remoteſt witneſs knows more of the matter than the neareſt, and the laſt inform'd is better perſwaded of it than the firſt. This was exactly the way the Paſſion of the *Thebean* Souldiers firſt crept into the World, and then inſenſibly got credit in the Church. And they have been for theſe Eight or Nine Hundred Years in a quiet Poſſeſſion of the glory of their Martyrdom, and do enjoy it peacably to this day, under the ſhadow and Authority of the greateſt Names, and the moſt renowned Doctors of all Chriſtian Communions. Now that we may diſtinguiſh the Romance from the Hiſtory, we muſt remove all the Miſts which the Legendaries and Martyrology-makers have ſpread over it. For the ſupport of ſo much of it as is purely Romantick; there are alledged Manuſcripts and Old Writings; and we muſt ſhew that thoſe who do pretend the greateſt skill in Antiquities, are lyable to miſtakes.

CHAP. IV.

That the moſt skilful Men are ſometimes miſtaken in the Judgments they make upon the Works of the Ancients.

IT will Evidently appear from what ſhall be ſaid hereafter, that *Baronius*, *Peter Francis Chifflet*,

Chifflet, Archbiſhop *Uſher*, and *Grotius*, have been miſtaken in their Judgments concerning the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, and the Relation Fathered upon *Eucherius*.

For Criticks are not always in the right. Though they have contributed much to the reviving of Learning, yet it does not thence follow, that even the moſt skilful Men in that Science are infallible. It hath very often happened that they have taken falſe Copies for Originals, and ſet upon Modern Writings the worth and value due to thoſe of Antiquity.

Thoſe who have any skill in Medals, know that the moſt underſtanding Men themſelves are apt ſometimes to be miſtaken. If one Examines the firſt Edition of the *Praeſtantiora Imperatorum Numiſmata* of Mr. *Vaillant*, Printed at *Paris* in the Year 1682, there one will find the Medals of *Germanicus*, of *Nero Druſus* his Father, of the Emperour *Claudius*, of *Julia* Wife to *Severus*, and of *Gordianus Affricanus* the Son, the Price and Rarity whereof this Medaliſt does mightily Extol. But if you caſt your Eye upon the Second Edition of 1692. there you will find the ſame Medals very much debaſed. Mr. *Vaillant*, acknowleging the three firſt to be ſuſpicious, and the two laſt abſolutely falſe. He praiſeth likewiſe in the ſame Work, one of *Trajan*'s Medals with a Pillar and an Owl on the top of it. And in his Remarks upon *Scelecta Numiſmata Seguini*, Publiſhed at *Paris* in the Year 1684. he confeſſeth ingenuouſly that the ſame was Counterfeit.

Vaillant Praeſt. Imp. Numiſm. pag. 12. 14, 16. 13.

Vaill. pag. 49.

Pag. 71.

'Tis

'Tis no leſs uſual to be deceived in matter of Statues and *Baſſo-Relievos*, then in Medals. We have a great many Examples of this kind; but it will ſuffice to give here only one ſingle inſtance: *Vazari* tells us, that *Michael Angelo*, to convince ſome Vertuoſos and Antiquaries, who valued nothing but what was Ancient, of the raſhneſs of their Judgment in ſuch caſes, made a Cupid and buried it under the ruines of an Old Building, having firſt broken off one of its Arms which he kept at home. All the Lovers of the Art came immediately to look upon it, and no Body did ſo much as queſtion the Antiquity of the piece, till *Michael Angelo* ſhewed them the Arm which he had kept by him, to convince them of their Errour, and to ſhew them how eaſily they might be impoſed upon, in a matter wherein they pretended to ſo much skill.

But miſtakes of this kind, have been yet more frequently made by thoſe who have imployed their Criticks upon thoſe Heathen Authors, which have been left to us either by the *Grecian* or *Latin* Antiquity. Every Body knows the witty trick *Muret* put upon *Scaliger*; how he compoſed ſome Verſes, and told him he had found them in an Old Manuſcript: And how *Scaliger*, who boaſted that he was very well acquainted with the genius and Style of every Age both in Proſe and Verſe, found immediately an Ancient Author for thoſe Verſes of *Muret*'s making: And being afterwards informed they were of his compoſing, he revenged himſelf of him by a Diſtich upon his Cheat. Theſe feigned and Counterfeit Works

were not unknown to Ancient *Greece*, ſince the Learned of thoſe times made it their Study to find them out. *Dionyſius Longinus* made a Treatiſe upon the ſame Subject; and we ſhould be informed now of a great many Fabulous Relations inſerted into Hiſtories, had not the ill Fate of Learning deprived us of the Works of that excellent Critick.

Τίνα παρὰ τὰς ἱστορίας οἱ γεγραμματικοὶ ὡς ἱστορικὰ ἐξηγῶνται.

But ſeeing that Men have naturally a reſpect for things which belong to Religion, one would think that they ſhould not ſuffer themſelves to be miſ-led by thoſe who have made it their buſineſs to impoſe upon the World; by inventing Fables, and Publiſhing ſuppoſititious Eccleſiaſtical Writings and Tranſactions. Nevertheleſs, by what Misfortune I know not; theſe frauds have been more frequent in the Church, than any where elſe, and it is impoſſible to Summ up the miſtakes, they have occaſioned amongſt the Learned in all Chriſtian Societies. So many ſpurious Writings, and ſuppoſititious Facts were made and Publiſhed even in the three firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, that *Amphilochius*, Biſhop of *Iconium*, ſo much eſteemed by St. *Baſil*, one of the moſt worthy Fathers of the Church, compoſed a whole Book of them, which is cited in the Acts of the Seventh Council. *There was ſcarcely any thing to be ſeen*, (to make uſe of *Fontanel's* Words in his Hiſtory of Oracles,) *but falſe Goſpels, falſe Epiſtles of the Apoſtles, falſe Hiſtories of their Lives*, &c. *The chief Men of the Church have been ſometimes deceived*, &c. *They did not always narrowly examine what ſeemed to favour Religion.*

Council. 7. *act.* 5. *Tom.* 3. *pag.* 552.

Religion. The heat and fervour they felt, when they fought for ſo good a cauſe, did not always ſuffer them to chuſe the beſt Weapons.

And the Diſtemper was ſo far from leſſening in the following Ages, that it ſtill more increaſed and the boldneſs in inventing Fables, and Forging falſe Lives of Martyrs and Saints, went ſo far, and became ſo common, that the Church thought it neceſſary to put a ſtop to it, by the Authority of its Canons. For in the Council of *Conſtantinople*, held in the Year 692, under *Juſtinian* the Younger, the Church condemned, in the 63*d*. Canon, the falſe Paſſions, and Fabulous Lives of Saints and Martyrs.

A great number of Learned Men have endeavoured in theſe latter times, to find out theſe ſuppoſititious Writings, and to aſcribe to every Author the Works belonging properly to him. And they would undoubtedly have been more ſucceſsful in it, had they not been miſled, as well as the People, by Intereſt or Partiality. For oftentimes both their Minds and Pens are ſway'd by prejudice and Paſſion: As if a Work were good or bad, Ancient or Modern, as it chanced to be look'd upon by Proteſtant or Popiſh Eyes; falſe and ſuppoſititious, if contrary to their Opinions, but Ancient, and of the true ſtamp, if it proved favourable to them.

But though they ſhould be allowed to have been free from Prejudice and Paſſion, yet it is no ſtrange thing to ſee Men differ in their Judgments. This follows neceſſarily the different applications, and Natural inclinations of their minds,

Some view things only on one ſide, and ſome on another. The greateſt part fix themſelves, before they have well examined all the Reaſons that are, and may be produced on both ſides. And ſometimes it happens that Men concern themſelves for ſome Works, as they do for ſome Perſons, without knowing why they are more for thoſe than for the others. Hence it is that the Writers of the ſame Church do not always agree in their Opinions. Cardinal *Baronius* ſpeaks of the Recognitions attributed to St. *Clement*, as of a ſink full of filthineſs and lies: Whereas *Bellarmine* maintains that they are St. *Clement's* own, or of ſome other Author as Ancient and as Learned as he. The ſame difference in Opinions is obſerved amongſt the Proteſtants concerning St. *Ignatius*'s Letters, though theſe Letters are generally, and with good reaſon look'd upon as one of the faireſt Monuments of the Apoſtolick Age. And Mr. *Dupin*, in his *Bibliotheca nova*, ſets aſide in a hundred places the Judgment and Authority of his Friends *Poſſevinus*, *Sixtus* of *Siena*, *Rainaldus*, *Bellarmine*, *Labbe*, and other Writers of his Religion, who have Criticis'd upon the Works of the Fathers.

Ann. Baron. Tom. 1. An. 51.

Bellarm. de lib. arb. lib. 5. c. 25.

This ſhews that the moſt Learned may ſometimes be miſtaken in their Judgments upon the Works of the Ancients. Nor is this much to be wondered at, ſince the intricacy and confuſedneſs wherewith ſome Tranſactions are related, and the diſtance of the time wherein they happened, make it a very hard matter for us now to diſcern Truth from Falſhood. Criticks borrow moſt

moſt part of their Light from the Quality of the Manuſcripts; and ſometimes theſe Manuſcripts, the Antiqnity whereof ſounds ſo high with ſome Men, are but Modern Writings. And particularly we ſhall conſider in another place, what Judgment one ought to paſs upon a Relation of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, which *Peter Francis Chifflet* took out of an Ancient Manuſcript of St. *Claudius*'s Monaſtery. But 'tis now time to come to our Proofs.

CHAP. V.

That St. Eucherius, *Biſhop of* Lions, *is not the Author who wrote that Paſſion of the* Thebean Souldiers, *which both* Surius, *and* Baronius *have followed.*

THE firſt proof we bring againſt the Relation of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, is, That it is clear and plain that St. *Eucherius*, Biſhop of *Lions*, is not the Author of it, and that his Name hath been ſet to it by ſome Cheat, to gain more Credit thereto, from the eſteem which the Church always had for the extraordinary Virtues and Merits of this great Prelate. To be convinced of this, 'twill ſuffice to mention only one paſſage, wherein 'tis ſaid of *Sigiſmond* King of *Burgundy*,

Diu noctuq; hymnorum, Psalmorumque decantatio non desinit, quod jubente præclaro Sanctoq; Martyre Beato Sigismundo Rege institutum, usque hodie conservatum est.

That they never cease Night nor Day to sing Psalms and Hymns in the Monastery of Agaunum: And that this Holy Practice, first appointed there by the blessed King and Martyr St. Sigismond, *is observed there to this very day.*

It visibly appears from this place, that when this Relation was made, King *Sigismond* was dead. It follows moreover from thence, that it must have been compos'd several Years after the Death of this Prince; since that Author, after he hath spoken of the Rule which King *Sigismond* caused to be established there, adds, that this Rule was strictly observed there, *usque hodie*, to this very day. So that were it true, that St. *Eucherius* was the Author of this Work, he must of necessity, not only have been contemporary to King *Sigismond*, but more than that he must have out-lived him many Years. But now it happens to be quite contrary, for St. *Eucherius* was dead, when *Sigismond* was yet on the Throne.

Most Historians do reckon the Death of this King of *Burgundy*, to have happen'd about the Year 520, and place that of St. *Eucherius* in the Year 441. 'Tis true, that Mr. *Dupin* refers it to the Year 454. upon the Authority of *Prosper*'s Chronicle. Some on the contrary carry it as far back as the Year 421. Amongst whom are *Gennadius* and *Ado*. But there is much reason to suspect in both these Authors, the disingenuity of some Transcriber, since it could

Dupin Nov. Bibl. Tom. 4. pag. 175.

could not be unknown to *Gennadius* and *Ado*, that St *Eucherius* was preſent at the Council of *Orange*, where his Name is found amongſt the Subſcribers; and that it is agreed on by every Body, that this Council was held about the Year of our Lord 441. Some indeed, to ſave this Anachroniſm, pretend that there have been two *Eucherius*'s, like the *Jews*, who to mend their deſperate Cauſe, have invented two *Meſſia*'s, to reconcile in both the fulfilling of the Oracles, which they cannot apply to one alone.

But, in ſhort, 'tis not poſſible that St *Eucherius*, Biſhop of *Lions*, ſhould be the Author of the Paſſion of the *Thebean Legion*, unleſs we allow him to have had the gift of Prophecy, and make him ſpeak Prophetically of thoſe Rules which were to be ſettled in the Monaſtery of *Agaunum*, ſeveral Ages after his Death. Should ſome Perſon now put out any Writings, under the Name of Monſieur *de Marca*, or of Cardinal *Duperron*, and mention therein the eſtabliſhment and Foundation of St *Cyr*. To ſhew that theſe Writings ought not to be aſcribed to theſe two great Men, it would ſuffice to make it appear, that they were dead ſeveral Years before *Lewis* the 14*th* made this Foundation. Nevertheleſs, this ſo plain a demonſtration of Forgery, hath not hindered *Surius*, in his Relation of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion* on the 22. of *September*, from confidently aſſerting, that St. *Eucherius* was the Author of the Acts of their Paſſion. 'Tis very ſtrange that *Baronius* ſhould *Surius Tom. 5. 22. Sept.*

make the ſame blunder, both in his Annals and in his Notes on the *Roman* Martyrology. And indeed this would ſeem yet more ſtrange, were it not plain, that this Learned Cardinal undertook in his Annals, not ſo much to give us the Hiſtory of the Church, as to defend the prejudices and ambitious pretenſions of the Church of *Rome* Therefore when its an advantage to him, to overlook ſome ſuppoſititious and Counterfeit Writing, he pretends he ſees neither contradiction nor Anchroniſm in it; he is no longer that able Critick, whoſe pierceing knowledge nothing can eſcape, and who clears and extricates the moſt obſcure and knotty things of Antiquity: In a word, he is no more *Baronius*.

Martyr. Rom. 10. Kalend. Oct. pag. 375.

Bellarm. in Catal. Script. Eccl. in Euch.

Cardinal *Bellarmine*, whoſe Zeal for the glory of the *Roman* Church did not yield to that of *Baronius*, hath taken another way to ſave the Truth of the Paſſion of the *Thebean Legion*, that it might not be objected to his Church, that it worſhipped ſome for Saints, who never had ſo much as a being in the World. For ſince Men would at the very firſt ſight be ſtartled, to ſee ſo long an interval of time between St. *Eucherius* and St. *Sigiſmond*, he hath endeavoured to cut it much ſhorter, and to render it ſo little, as that it might paſs wholly unobſerved, or however be but very little minded. He tells us, that this Biſhop of *Lions* lived till the Year 499. and he grounds his conjecture upon a place in the Life of St. *Ceſarius*, biſhop of *Arles*, compos'd by *Cyprian* the Prieſt; where it is ſaid, that theſe two Biſhops, being in company together, reſtored

red a Woman to her former health, who was afflicted with a very ſore Diſtemper. If there were any certainty in this Conjecture of Cardinal *Bellarmine*, *Eucherius* would have been almoſt contemporary with King *Sigiſmond*. For *Meſſanius* a Prieſt, and *Stephen* a Deacon, two other Diſciples of St. *Ceſarius*, in the Book they have added to the Life of this Holy Prelate, ſay that he dyed forty Years after he had been made a Biſhop, and ſince every body knows that he ſucceeded *Ennoius*, about the Year 504. his Death ſhould be placed in the Year 544 or 545. For it is certain that he was preſent at the Council of *Arles* in 524 and at the ſecond Council of *Orange* in 529. And to prove that he was alive in 528. we have a Letter that Pope *Vigil* wrote to him under the *Conſulſhip* of *John* and *Voluſian*.

But though we ſhould grant Cardinal *Bellarmine*'s Conjecture not to be groundleſs, yet he would be but little the better for it. 'Tis not enough to prolong St. *Eucherius*'s Life to the Year 499. 'Tis to no purpoſe, likewiſe to prove that St. *Eucherius* might have ſeen St. *Ceſarius* Biſhop of *Arles*. King *Sigiſmond* dyed about the Year 520. and they muſt make it appear that St. *Eucherius* out-lived him a great many Years, to make good the *uſque hodie* of the place we have before quoted. Now it is ſo far from being true, that St. *Eucherius* did out-live St. *Sigiſmond*, that on the contrary, there is no likely-hood that he liv'd till the Year 499. according to Cardinal *Bellarmine*'s Conjecture. It appears by the Subſcriptions of the firſt Council of

Orange,

Orange, that he was Biſhop of *Lions* in 411; and conſequently he muſt have been then at leaſt thirty, or forty Years Old; for at that time it was not uſual to raiſe any Perſon under that age to the Dignity of a Biſhop; Biſhopricks being not yet beſtowed as rewards upon Families, and the Holineſs of Canons holding yet out againſt the Vanity of the Clergy, and the Uſurpations of Kings. Now ſince we are certain of this, can we think it probable that St. *Eucherius* ſhould live to ſee St. *Ceſarius* Biſhop of *Arles*, who was not raiſed to that Dignity, till after the Death of *Ennodius*, about the Year 504. Indeed, I think a Man muſt needs be very bold in his Conjectures, who can allow St *Eucherius* to have lived above a Hundred Years, if he have no other Warrant for it, but that place of the Life of St. *Ceſarius*: Thoſe who ſhall carefully examine this Life of St. *Ceſarius*, will agree, that it ought not to be rely'd upon too much. 'Tis true, it is polite and judicious enough for that Age, and ſeems not unworthy of him who had been one of the Diſciples of St. *Ceſarius*, and who for his great Piety and Merits was raiſed to the Dignity of a Biſhop, as appears by his Name found in the Subſcriptions of the ſecond Council of *Orange*. But what if ſome Impoſtour here diſguiſed himſelf under the Name of a Famous Diſciple of St. *Ceſarius*? At leaſt this pretended Diſciple ſeems not to be much inform'd of his Maſters Affairs. He ſaith in one place, that St. *Ceſarius* ſent ſome Grave and Learned Men to a Council Aſſembled at *Va-*

lence

lence to Condemn the Opinions of *Pelagius*. Which having given me occaſion to examine the Acts of the Councils held at *Valence*, I find nothing in them concerning the Hereſie of *Pelagius*, wherein St. *Ceſarius* could have any hand. So that being miſtaken in a matter of Fact of this Importance, he might as well have been over-ſeen in joyning *Eucherius* and *Ceſarius* in the Cure of that Diſeaſed Woman.

It appears that the Learned Doctor *Cave* relyed a little too much upon this Life of St. *Ceſarius*. He ſaith in his Hiſtory of Eccleſiaſtical Writers, that this Holy Biſhop, underſtanding that he was ſuſpected of Pelagianiſm, cauſed a Council to be Aſſembled at *Valence*, to clear himſelf of this accuſation; and being hindred by reaſon of the illneſs of his Health from going to it, he maintained there publickly by his Legates, that Man in the ſtate of Sin, cannot work out his Salvation without a preventing Grace. But if, inſtead of following this *Cyprian*, Diſciple of St. *Ceſarius*, and who was afterwards Biſhop of *Thoulon*, Doctor *Cave* had given himſelf the trouble to look over the Councils of *Valence*, he would have obſerved that in the firſt, which was held in the Year 734. their whole buſineſs was about *Bigamy*; that in the Second, which met in 599. (ſome place it in the Year 684, and ſome in 589.) they were wholly taken up with the great Donatives which *Gumtran* King of *Burgundy* had beſtowed upon the Church: And that the Third, in which *Pelagius*, *Hinmark*, and *John Scot* were Condemned,

Cave Hiſt. Lit. Script. Eccleſ. p. 333. in Cæſario.

ned, and the Acts whereof are cited by *Forbesius* in his Instructions, was not called till the Year 855. as appears by the Acts of it being presented to the Emperour *Lothary*, and to *Charles* the Bald. Now St. *Cesarius* was unborn at the time of the First Council, since Doctor *Cave* brings him into the World, only in the Year 469. And he was Dead when the Second met, according to the same Doctor, who places his Death in the Year 542. And 'tis, I think needless to add that he was not concern'd in the Third, which was held in 855. and in which the *Pelagian* Opinions were Condemned. This short digression, which we have thought necessary, to remove St. *Cesarius* from St. *Eucherius*'s times, will not seem, I hope, unseasonable. It appears then that *Bellarmine*, for all his Conjecture, cannot bring St. *Eucherius* near enough to St *Sigismond* King of *Burgundy*. The distance is too great to admit of any means of reconciling the Dispute. We shall observe by the way, that *Usuard* and *Aimonius* have commited the like mistake: But because it is but a matter of three or four Years difference, they may perhaps find Friends to help them out. These two Writers say, that *Clovis* was delivered from a dangerous Sickness, by the Vows and Prayers of St. *Severine*, *Abbot* of *Agaunum*. And it is certain that *Clovis* was Dead three or four Years before *Sigismond* had founded that Monastery. *Gregory* of *Tours* saith, that he caused the same to be Built, and richly Endowed it, after the Death of his Father *Gombaldus*. But *Marius* Bishop of *Avan-*

Avanches marks preciſely the Year in his Chronicle, and ſaith that *Sigiſmond* founded the *Agaunian* Monaſtery, under the Conſulſhip of *Florentius* and *Anthemius*, *viz.* Four Years after the Death of *Clovis*. This Remark is owing to Monſieur *de Valois*, in his Notice of the Gauls; where he ſaith, that he cannot underſtand how *Severine* could have been *Abbot* of that Monaſtery in *Clovis*'s time. Nevertheleſs the Miraculous recovery of a great King, being of great Credit to the Prayers and Suffrages of Monaſteries, *Uſuard* and *Aimonius*, who were both Monks, cauſed Prayers to be made for *Clovis* in *Agaunum*, even before King *Sigiſmond* had it in his thoughts to build a Monaſtery there. 'Tis true, that *Bollandus* would fain perſwade us, that this Prince did only repair and beautifie it. But this he aſſerts without any ground, ſince both the Ancient and Modern Writers who ſpeak of the firſt Foundation of the *Agaunian* Monaſtery, do all generally agree that 'twas St. *Sigiſmond* King of *Burgundy*, who cauſed it to be Built to the Honour of the *Thebean Legion*, which ſuffered Martyrdom in that place.

Hadr. Valeſius Notit. Gall in Heaunum.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

That the Acts of the Council of Agaunum, *concerning the* Thebean Legion, *are as falſe as the Acts of their Paſſion.*

BUT whether King *Sigiſmond* only beautified the Monaſtery of *Agaunum*, or whether he laid the firſt Foundations thereof, 'tis all one to us. 'Tis enough that we can prove that the Paſſion, which we aſſert to be falſe, is poſteriour to all this. And that it is ſo cannot be deny'd, ſince mention is made there of the *Baſilick*, which was Dedicated at *Agaunum* to the Memory of the *Thebean* Souldiers. If you are not pleaſed to rely upon the Hiſtory of their Paſſion as it is related in *Surius* and *Baronius*, and wherein notice is taken of the Rules made by St. *Sigiſmond* in the *Agaunian* Monaſtery; we ſhall willingly pitch upon, and refer our ſelves to the latter Acts that are mended, ſince in theſe as well as in the others, mention is made of a Miracle that happen'd when the Church of *Agaunum* was a building to the Honour of the *Thebean Legion*. For if King *Sigiſmond* did only repair and Adorn that Church, the time of theſe Works muſt neceſſarily be plac'd in the Year 500. and conſequently St *Encherius* could not

not have made mention of them, ſeeing all do agree that he dyed about the Year 440.

We may ſtrengthen this Argument with another taken from the Acts of a Council, ſuppoſed to have been aſſembled by order of King *Sigiſmond* at *Agaunum*, and in which Sixty Biſhops put it into his Head to gather the Bones of the *Thebean* Souldiers, and to Dedicate a *Baſilick*, or ſtately Church to them. Though this Council is viſibly falſe and ſuppoſititious, yet it will be of good help to diſcover the falſity of the Paſſion of the Souldiers of *Agaunum*, Fathered upon St. *Eucherius*. The Acts of this pretended Council are ſet down in the Fourth Tome of the Councils by *Labbe* and *Coſſart*, Theſe two Learned Jeſuites were very ſenſible of the Forgery of theſe Acts, but it would have been too much againſt the grain to have confeſſed it. They were therefore content to ſay, they wondered they did not ſee amongſt the Subſcriptions the Name of *Avitus* Archbiſhop of *Vienna*, who both by reaſon of his Eminent Qualities, and for the Dignity of his See, ought of courſe to have been preſent at that Council. The Oratory-Prieſts being fairer dealers than the Jeſuites, *Le Cointe*, one of them, freely declares in his Annals, that the Acts of this Council were altogether falſe. However, as falſe as they are, they have brought great incomes to the Monaſtery of *Agaunum*. They make St. *Sigiſmond* to give to it a great number of Villages, and very conſiderable Lands in the *Dioceſes* of *Vienna*, *Lions*, *Grenoble*, and of the Cities of *Aoſte*, *Avanches*, *Lauſanne*,

Tom. 4. Council Labbe and Coſſart. pag. 1557.

Le Cointe Ann. Eccleſ. an. ch. 536. num. 224. pag. 534.

Lauſanne, and *Beſanſon*, *&c.* The Cheat indeed was worth the making. But we muſt confeſs that the makers thereof were not very skilful in their contrivance of it. The truth is, that in thoſe times People were ſo credulous, that they gave Credit to the groſſeſt tales. They were contriv'd and conceiv'd under the ſhadow of Monkiſh Holineſs, and were brought forth into the World without contradiction, or any Body to oppoſe them. The Monk who Forged this Council, makes both King *Sigiſmond* and the Biſhops to ſay very ridiculous things. The Country Peaſants of *Valeſia* would now ſpeak better Senſe. *Le Cointe* obſerveth, that the Acts of this Council are Dated in the beginning of the laſt of *April*, and towards the end of the Ides of May: That it is ſaid at firſt, that the Council was held at *Agaunum*, and again, that it was Aſſembled near that place. Which ſhews the poor Monk hardly knew what he did. He adds that Sixty Biſhops met together at *Agaunum*, and in *Sigiſmond*'s time there were not above Seven and Twenty Biſhops in all, throughout the whole Kingdom of *Burgundy*. He ſaith, that *Theodorus*, Biſhop of *Sion* in *Valeſia*, asked what ſhould be done with the Bodies of the *Thebean* Souldiers that laid yet unburied upon the Ground. And in St. *Sigiſmond*'s time, there was no Biſhops-See at *Sion*. The Biſhops-See was transferred thither, not till many Years after, it having always been before at a place which is called *Martignac*, or *Martigni*, which is the Ancient *Octodurum*. So that this *Theodorus* being con-

contemporary with King *Sigiſmond*, ought to have been call'd *Octodurenſis Epiſcopus*, and not *Sedunenſis*, as the Council-Forger hath done.

But the thing we ought chiefly to obſerve, is, that both *Labbe* and *Coſſart*, place this Council in the Year 516. The Acts do expreſly mention, that when it was held, the Buildings which King *Sigiſmond* ordered to be made at *Agaunum*, were finiſhed, and wanted only to be Dedicated, and appointed to their uſe. This Prince ſaith, in the beginning of his Deed of Gift, *that he makes Hinnemond Abbot of the Monaſtery of* Agaunum, *which, by the help of God, he hath Built in his Kingdom of* Burgundy. And a little before he ſays, that all the Biſhops do repreſent to him, that the Reliques of *Mauricius*, *Exuperius*, *Candidus*, and *Victor*, ought to be depoſited in the New Church, which he hath cauſed to be Built. The Biſhops of this pretended Council are there chiefly taken up with regulating the ſinging of Pſalms, the Offices, Obſervances, and whatever was to be Practiſed in that Monaſtery. Now the buſineſs is to know, whether the Paſſion of the *Theban Legion*, which we aſſert to be falſe, is anteriour to that Council, or happen'd after its ſitting. If they ſay it is anteriour, we ask, how could the Author of it ſpeak of a Monaſtery which was not yet Built, and of Rules not yet eſtabliſh'd? If it be anſwered, that this Paſſion was Written after the ſitting of the Council, which according to *Labbe* and

Tom. 4. Concil Labbe. Coſſ. pag. 1557.

De jam dicto Monaſterio quod vocatur Agaunum, quod nunc Domino adjuvante infra Regnum noſtrum Burgundionum conſtruximus.

Infra ambitum Baſilicæ quam clementia Regis ad hoc opus ornare juſſit.

Coſſart met in the Year 516. it follows, that St. *Eucherius* is not the Author of this Paſſion, ſince he died in the Year 440.

If the Acts of this Council be compared with the Paſſion, one cannot but ſuſpect that the Impoſtour, who compoſed it, had before his Eyes the Acts of this Council. 'Tis ſaid in theſe Acts, that the Biſhops conſulted with King *Sigiſmond*, what Diſcipline was to be ſet up in the Monaſtery of *Agaunum*, and that the Rules which ſhould be preſcrib'd to the Monks, might be ſo framed as to laſt for ever. And the Author of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean* Souldiers, as it is related both by *Baronius* and *Surius*, ſaith, that they never ceaſe, Day nor Night, to ſing Pſalms and Hymns in the *Agaunian* Monaſtery; this practice having been eſtabliſhed by the Bleſſed King and Martyr St. *Sigiſmond*, and being ſtill in force there to this very day.

But that the Acts of this Council, are forged, Father *Le Cointe* hath given infallible proofs. And whereas *Labbe* and *Coſſart* place this Council in the Year 516. we ſhould not fear being much miſtaken, if we charged the Forgery upon ſome Impoſtor of the Seventh or Eighth Century. For theſe and the like Writings are the Titles and Foundations both of the Worſhip, vaſt Power, and Immenſe Revenues of the Church of *Rome*. 'Tis true, we are told that the Manuſcripts of theſe things are kept in the *Vatican* Library, or in that of *Florence*; and that they have all the Characters of an uncontroulable Antiquity.

But

But *Marſham*, a man very well skilled in diſtinguiſhing between Old and Modern Manuſcripts, adviſeth us to truſt to them ſo much the leſs, by how much the Older they are ſaid to be. And he is favoured in his Opinion by *Papebrook* a Jeſuite, who obſerves, that you'l ſcarcely find any Acts or Manuſcripts true and ſincere from the Reign of *Dagobert* the Firſt, upwards; that is beyond the Year of our Lord 640. Which is much about the time, in which the Fables which we are now Examining were invented.

Marſh. in Proſpl. ad Monaſt.

Cautè intuendæ ſunt hujuſmodi Chartæ, quæ fidem habent eo minorem quò majorem præ ſe ferunt Antiquitatem.

Papebroch. in Proſpl. num. 125. Chartas ſinceras & genuinas vix reperiri.

'Tis ſtrange indeed, that Father *Mabillon*, one of the moſt Eminent Men in *Europe* in that kind of Learning, ſhould Condemn the Opinion both of *Marſham* and *Papebrook*. He thinks that theſe two Learned Men were miſtaken, and to prove it, he reports ſome Acts of the 6*th* or 7*th* Age; but this is nothing to the purpoſe; for *Marſham* and *Papebrook* did never deny but there were true Acts ancienter than the Reign of *Dagobert* the Firſt; but they only affirmed, that theſe Writings are very ſcarce, and can hardly be found; ſo that Father *Mabillon*, to have an occaſion to contradict theſe two great Men, makes them ſay abſolutely, what they only meant with a reſtriction. And beſides, 'tis one thing to go about to prove from the Words of ſome Authors, that there have been Kings before *Dagobert* the Firſt, who made Gifts in Writing to ſeveral Churches, and another to prove that theſe Writings do yet continue, and have been handed

down to us, and that they have not been worn out by time, loſt or deſtroyed by the Accidents and Revolutions which have happened in the courſe of ſo many Ages, nor falſify'd and corrupted by the covetouſneſs, ignorance, and infidelity of Men. The firſt of theſe two things, which is not in queſtion, Father *Mabillon* takes upon him to prove, but ſaith not one word of the ſecond which he ought to have proved. But here is the buſineſs. *Papebrook* is plain and downright, becauſe he, being a Jeſuite, is of an Order of a very new Date, and which therefore needs not go up and ſearch very high for Titles: Whereas Father *Mabillon* is a *Benedictine* Monk, of the Congregation of St. *Maur*. And St. *Benet's* Order hath a great concern to maintain the Antiquity of their rich Foundations. *Papebrook* confeſſes ingenuouſly, that moſt of the Acts in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries have been falſify'd by Monks, becauſe this reproach could not fall on the Jeſuites, who were not then in the World. But by reaſon there were at that time almoſt no other Monks in the Weſt but the *Benedictines*, 'tis worth the while to ſee, with what Zeal Father *Mabillon* ſtickles in their defence. But while he endeavours to make their Cauſe too good, he betrays his own.

He proves that the falſification of Acts, ought not to be laid only at the Church-mens Doors; that every Body had then a hand in the corrupting of them; that Cheats and Impoſtours were as common at that time amongſt the Laity, as in the Church; and that both the watchfulneſs

and

and Authority of the Emperours were taken up in preventing and chaſtiſing theſe knaviſh tricks. This is juſt what *Marſham* and *Papebrook* do both mean and ſay. We have thought fit to make this Obſervation. For having a very great Veneration for true Antiquity, we ſhould be unwilling to have any Body allarm'd at our impugning the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, which hath obtained the Belief of ſo many Ages in the Church.

CHAP. VII.

That the Paſſion of the Agaunian *Martyrs, Publiſhed by* Francis Chifflet *in his Edition of* Paulinus, *is as falſe as that which* Surius *and* Baronius *have followed.*

THE Relation of the Paſſion of the *Thebean* Souldiers, which both *Surius* and *Baronius* have followed, is a piece ſo notoriouſly ſuppoſititious, that it is now quite laid aſide even in the *Roman* Church. This does evidently appear, in the Judgment which *Anthony Pagi* makes of it in his Criticks upon *Baronius*. *The Acts of the Martyrs of* Agaunum, ſaith he, *which* Baronius *hath taken out of* Surius, *and which he thought were written by St.* Eucherius, *Biſhop of* Lions, *are falſe and ſuppoſititious. There 'tis ſaid, that this Martyrdom*

Pagi inſt. cut. an. 590. ch. 14. Maxim. 12. p. 124.

tyrdom happened under the Pontificate of Marcelline, *when* Maximian *went into* Gaul, *to put a ſtop to the Bagaudian Rebellion; and it is certain that it was in the beginning of* Diocleſian's *Reign, that* Maximian *made this Expedition during the Pontificate of* Cajus. Therefore the Doctors who had the direction of the Impreſſion of *Bibliotheca Patrum*, which was Printed by the Aniſſons at *Lions* in the Year 1677 were wiſer than to give out amongſt the Works of St. *Eucherius* the Paſſion of the *Thebean* Souldiers, as it was reported both by *Surius* and *Baronius*. *We give* (ſay they) *the Acts of the Martyrs of* Agaunum *written by St.* Eucherius *Biſhop of* Lions *and extracted out of a very Ancient Manuſcript; thoſe that are put out by* Surius *having been ſpoiled and corrupted by ſome Anonymous Writer of the laſt Ages.* Peter Francis *Chifflet* is the Man who Printed theſe new Acts of the *Agaunian* Martyrs in his *Paulinus Illuſtratus*, and which, he ſaith, he Copied out of a very Ancient Manuſcript of St. *Claude's* Monaſtery. As for *Theodorus Ruinart*, he hath followed *Chifflet's* Copy, in that Collection of the Acts of Martyrs which he cauſed to be Printed at *Paris* in the Year 1689. There he confeſſes, that the former Acts Publiſhed by *Surius* were Counterfeit, and thoſe likewiſe that were Printed by *Mombritius*, then he adds, that in the very time it was given over by the Learned, to find out the true Acts of the *Agaunian* Martyrs, *Chifflet* had happily diſcovered them in an Ancient Manuſcript. It ſeems then that the *Thebean* Souldiers caſe is not yet quite deſperate,

Bibl. Patrum apud Aniſſ. Lugduni, an. 1677. Tom. 6. pag. 866.

Theod. Ruin. Act. prim. Martyr. pag. 285.

ſperate, there being another door for the true Acts of their Martyrdom to come in at. The Jeſuites are very Crafty Men, I muſt confeſs. They find immediately a way to remove every difficulty. The World was ready to forſake the *Thebean* Souldiers and their Paſſion, when juſt in the nick of time, Father *Chifflet*, hath found a Manuſcript in the Monaſtery of Mount *Jura*, which gives a faithful account of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, and is free from thoſe falſities which are ſo palpable both in *Surius* and *Baronius*. Not a word there of *Marcelline's* Pontificate, of King *Sigiſmond*, nor of the Revolt of *Aelius* and *Amandus*, Authors of the *Bagaudian* Inſurrection in *Gaul*. You have all in it but this. Both the Paſſions are in every thing alike. Only two or three Events are wanting in that of *Chifflet*, which might ſerve as a ſure Epoche, whereby to diſcover exactly the time wherein it hapned. A perſon more miſtruſtful than I, might eaſily believe, that it is not without ſome good reaſon, that theſe places are not to be found in *Chifflet's* Manuſcript. There would be leſs cauſe to ſuſpect it, had other circumſtances been left out of ſmaller conſequence, and ſuch as do not ſerve to mark out exactly the time and age of the Piece.

But 'tis in vain for Father *Chifflet* to boaſt the antiquity of his Manuſcript. We have not forgot the Advice which *Marſham* and *Papebrook* have given us, not to truſt too much to Manuſcripts, which have on them the moſt ancient dreſs. Were we admitted to compare *Chifflet's*

Manuſcript with that of *Surius*, we ſhould ſoon ſee whether of them has got the beſt looks of Truth and Antiquity. The Acts of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean* Souldiers were Printed at *Ingolſtadt*, under the Jeſuites inſpection, in the Year 1617. by the care of *Stewartius*, who was ſure he had Examined the beſt Manuſcripts he could find: *Peter Natalis* and *William Baldeſan*, who in *Italy*, writ the Hiſtory they have left us of the *Thebean Legion*, were not wanting to conſult the Manuſcripts, extant in the beſt Libraries of that Country. Though Father *le Cointe* does diſown the Acts of *Surius*, nevertheleſs he acknowledgeth 'em to be conform to the greateſt number of the Manuſcripts that are kept in the Archives of the Church. Notwithſtanding, Father *Chifflet* will needs have his Manuſcript to be the only one that is true and ſincere, and thoſe of all the other Writers to be ſpurious and corrupted. I would fain know who told him, that his own was not mended by ſome Monk, who underſtood Hiſtory ſo well, as to perceive the Anachroniſms and contradictions in the Acts of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*. This is not without Example, and we might mention ſeveral; for the Monks formerly did what they pleaſed with the Writings of their Predeceſſors. *Fauſtus* compoſed the Life of St. *Severine*, Abbot of *Agaunum*, of whom mention hath been already made. An Anonymous Author, ſome Ages after, added to it ſome things, cut off others, and dreſſed it up after his own Fancy; as Father *le*

Cointe.

Cointe complains in his Annals. He tells us further, that another *Fauſtus* having Written the Life of St. *Maurus*, it was not lik'd by *Odo*, an Abbot in the Dioceſe of *Angers*, in the Year 863. and that he changed it in ſuch manner, that it were to be wiſhed he had never meddled with it at all. And now can Father *Chifflet* warrant that no ſuch hand hath ever made bold with his Manuſcript? The Acts of the *Agaunian* Souldiers, having no ſuch thing in them as Gifts to Monks and Monaſteries; 'twas no hard matter to find them corrected in ſome Old Manuſcripts. But I queſtion much whether any ſuch Manuſcript can be produced, as will ſerve to rectifie the Acts of the Council of *Agaunum*, wherein ſo many conſiderable Revenues are beſtowed on the Monks of that place. Let any Body read Mr. *Dodwel*'s Diſſertation upon the ſmall number of Martyrs, and he will ſee there what ſtreſs one ought to lay upon the Acts and the Manuſcripts from whence they were taken. 'Tis true, that * *Theodore Ruinart*, in the Edition he hath lately put out at *Paris*, of the Acts of ſome Martyrs, prefixes a long Preface, wherein he oppoſes Mr. *Dodwels* Opinion concerning the ſmall number of Martyrs; but at the ſame time, he confeſſes, that they who gathered their Acts have often added to, or cut off from them what they liſted.

Le Cointe, An. 609.

* *Theod. Ruin. Præf. in Act. Martyr. alii reſecuerunt nonnulla, quæ ſibi in illis Actis diſplicebant.*

One may ſee in the ſame Preface, that the Acts of moſt of the Martyrs having periſhed, either

Ex iis etiam Actis pleraq; perierunt quibus alia poſtmodùm ſubſtituta fuere, ſed quæ ad iſtorum Auctoritatem non pertingunt nedùm ad priorum fanceritatem.

by

by the ravage and burnings made by the *Barbarians*, or by the Orders of Heathen Magiſtrates; others were ſubſtituted in their place, but ſuch as have not the Authority of the former, and much leſs can they pretend to the ſame ſincerity and exactneſs. Theſe Acts have been, by the Monks of the laſt Ages, ſo diſfigur'd and ſtuffed with ſo many Fables, that the honeſter and more ingenuous of the Church of *Rome* have been aſhamed of it, and have publickly expreſſed their Sorrow for it. *Lewis Vives*, and *Melchior Canus*, have grievouſly complained that *Diogenes Laertius* has Written the Lives of the Pagan Philoſophers with more integrity and Wiſdom, than the Chriſtians have done thoſe of their Martyrs, Confeſſors, and Virgins. When it was firſt given out that *Lippomanus*, Biſhop of *Verona*, was upon correcting the Acts and Old Legends of Saints, all good Men of the *Romiſh* Church were very glad at the News, hoping that he would have purged them from all the groſs lies which *Metaphraſtes*, *Comeſtor*, and *Jacobus de Voragine* had left behind them. But *Lippomanus*, and *Surius* made all things worſe, inſtead of mending them. For before this, the Acts and Lives of Saints were look'd upon as pious Romances, and a production of the ill-regulated zeal of the Legend-Writers. But then they were eſteemed quite another thing, after they had been Reviſed by *Surius*,

Lud. Vives de Trad. Diſc. lib. 5.

Melchior Canus, Loc. 11. *c.* 6.

Dolenter hoc dico multò Severius a Laertio Vitas Philoſophorum ſcriptas, quam a Chriſtianis Vitas Sanctorum, longeque incorruptius & integrius Suetonius, &c.

Surius, *Lippomanus*, and *Junius Mombritius*, who contented themſelves with taking away only the moſt palpable and obvious falſities, retaining thoſe which they thought were not ſo offenſive, and then proteſting that they had gone up to the head, and had conſulted the beſt Manuſcripts *Roſweidus*, *Bollandus*, *Godfrey Henſchenius*, and *Papebrochius*, who are come after, thinking to do ſome Service to the Learned, by gathering all whether good or bad, have not given us a truer account of the Acts of Martyrs and Saints, but only have incumbred Mens Studies with their huge and bulky Volumes.

'Tis not that we believe, that the Doctors of the Romiſh Communion are willing to countenance lyes and Forgeries. We do them more juſtice than ſo They would undoubtedly have all this ſilly ſtuff taken out of their Church Service, Breviaries, and Martyrologies, but they know not how it can be done. They fear to give ſome advantage to the Proteſtants, and to furniſh them with Weapons againſt the infallibility of their Church. And the Learned amongſt them are afraid to bring upon themſelves the hatred and perſecution of Monks and Fryers, who make a Trade of theſe Impoſtures amongſt ſilly Women, and the more ignorant ſort of People. 'Tis known all over *France*, what troubles they brought upon the Biſhop of St. *Pons*, one of the moſt worthy Prelates of that Kingdom, for taking out of the Calendar of his Dioceſe ſeveral Saints, whoſe Saintſhip might be called in queſtion, and whoſe Suffrages he did not ſo much eſteem.

ſteem. This is the reaſon why moſt of thoſe who are ſufficiently convinced of theſe abuſes, are contented to bewail them in ſecret, not having the Courage to undertake the redreſſing of them. There are ſome others, who, thinking it unſufferable that their Religious Worſhip ſhould ſeem to have no other ground than the falſe Legends of Saints and Martyrs, have indeed taken away from the Story what was moſt fictitious, but yet have kept ſtill the Eſſential part of it. Father *Chifflet* was perhaps one of theſe, and therefore he found juſt in time a Manuſcript of the Paſſion of the *Agaunian* Martyrs, more accurate, and truer than the Manuſcripts of *Surius* and *Baronius*. Finally, we might add; that Manuſcripts, as well as other Books, are ſubject to the rigour of the *Index Expurgatorius*. And how ſhould they ſtick at maiming them when they fear they will give any advantage to the Proteſtants, ſince they make no ſcruple ſometimes of ſuppreſſing them wholly. We are not willing to ſet down here the Story of the Edition of *Anaſtaſe*, Publiſhed by the Jeſuits of *Mayence* in 1602. in which they cut off what we read in the Manuſcript of *Heydelberg* about Pope *Joan*, and of the trick they put us upon *Marquardus Freherus*, who had diſcovered it to them. *Fabrotus*, in his new Edition of that Author, Printed at *Paris* in the Year 1649. hath been ſo ſincere as to own the expunging that paſſage; but at the ſame time, was not ſo ingenuous as to reſtore it. Every Body knows the Story of St. *Chryſoſtom*'s Letter to *Ceſarius* the Monk, and of *Theodoret*'s

Theodoret's Commentary upon the difference that aroſe between St. *Paul* and St. *Peter*, the which as not favouring Tranſubſtantiation, and the Authority and Infallibility of the Pope, they have endeavoured to ſtifle and to ſuppreſs. Mr. *Alix* having diſcovered this Myſtery of iniquity, acquainted the Publick with it, in his excellent Letter to Mr. *Hambden*. But after all, *Peter Francis Chifflet* is not the firſt Writer, who to extricate himſelf out of a difficulty, or to purchaſe the glory of ſome curious diſcovery, hath taken an occaſion to find a Manuſcript. 'Tis not of late Years that there have been *Annius's* of *Viterbo* and *Varilla's*, eſpecially amongſt the pretenders to Antiquity, and Compilers of *Anecdota*, or Secret Hiſtories.

Alix Expoſtul. de St. J. Chryſ. pag. 9.

But though theſe Remarks may not perhaps ſeem unſeaſonable, yet we have no need of them for clearing the matter of Fact now in queſtion. Father *Chifflet's* Manuſcript hath not brought us to ſuch ſtraits, as to reduce us to meer gueſſes and conjectures. For admitting his Manuſcript to be both as Ancient and Correct as he pleaſes; the *Thebean* Souldiers would not be a jot the better for it. We ſhall, in the concluſion, examine their cauſe without any regard to the Manuſcripts and Acts of their Paſſion, and ſhall deduce, from the very circumſtances of their Martyrdom, ſuch Arguments as will demonſtrate the falſity of it. And we muſt own our obligation to Father *Chifflet*, that we ſhall now Fight no longer in the Dark, without either ſeeing or knowing our Adverſary. We know now whom

whom we are to deal with, and who 'tis we are to encounter. Before this, while we attack'd the Acts which *Surius* and *Baronius* have left us, and were proving that St. *Eucherius*, Bishop of *Lions*, could not be the Author of them, it might have been answered we took pains to no purpose; that we ought to have known that there have been two St. *Eucherius*'s, and that the Acts of the *Agaunian* Passion were of the latters composing, who was present at the Council of *Orange* in the Year 529. This very thing *Theophilus Raynaldus* hath endeavoured to prove in his Catalogue of the Saints of *Lions*. So that after all our endeavours, we might chance to be in the same plunge with the *Sosia's* in *Plautus*, concerning the two *Amphytrions*, and with the Parliament of *Toulouse* in the case of the two *Martins Guerra*. But now we must return our thanks to Father *Chifflet*, for having help'd us out of these doubts and uncertainties. He agrees with *Baronius*, that there was but one St. *Eucherius*; and his Reasons are so weighty and strong, that it seems strange, that the Learned Dr. *Cave*, who must needs have seen them in the *Paulinus Illustratus* of that Author, should yet be of the Opinion of *Theophilus Raynaldus*, about the two Sts. *Eucherius*'s, and should attribute to the *Junior* the Acts of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean* Souldiers. We shall now go on with our proofs against the *Agaunian* Martyrs, and shall draw them from that Ancient and accurate Manuscript, upon the Credit of which Father *Chifflet* hath reformed those Acts, which both *Surius* and *Baronius* have followed.

Theoph. Raynal. in Ind. Sanct. Lugd. p. 227.

Cave Ann. ch. 434. p. 335. quamplurimi Eucherio Juniori adscribunt, & rectè quidem.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

That the Style of the true St. Eucherius *is different from that of the Paſſion of the* Agaunian *Souldiers, Publiſhed by* Chifflet.

IF we compare *Chifflet*'s Copy with that of *Surius*, we ſhall obſerve in it the ſame Style, the ſame Expreſſions, Thoughts, and Opinions; ſo that one would conclude it to be the very ſame Piece; that place only excepted, where mention is made of King *Sigiſmond*, who in that Copy is not contemporary with the true St. *Eucherius* by many Years. But one cannot find in theſe Acts of *Chifflet*, the Style, Genius, and Air of St. *Eucherius*. *Eraſmus*, who had not the Reputation of being too Liberal of his praiſes, thinks he can never Extol too much the true St. *Eucherius*'s Letter to *Valerian*, *de Contemptu mundi*. He ſaith, that the Chriſtian Religion never had any Writers, no not amongſt the greateſt Profeſſors of Eloquence, who could match him in his Style and way of Writing. *Andreas Schottus* calls his Letter, in his Preface to St. *Eucherius*'s Works, *a Golden Letter*. But theſe ſo high Praiſes, and given too by Men of ſo refined

Eraſm. Bibl. Patr. Tom. 6. p. 886. Nihil video profectum a noſtræ Religionis hominibus, qui Eloquentiæ quoque gloria floruerunt, quod cum hujus phraſi ſit conferendum.

Andreas Schottus in Epiſtola aurea ad Valerianum.

refined a knowledge, are in no wiſe ſuitable to the Author of the Paſſion of our Martyrs. And it is certain, that if *Eucherius*, Biſhop of *Lions*, compoſed that Letter to *Valerian*, he never could be the Author of the Hiſtory of the *Agaunian* Souldiers.

'Tis true, an Author cannot always be the ſame in all his Works. The moſt happy Genius, does not like a fertil ſoil always bear alike, nor yield ſo plentifully at one time at it does another. The Treaſures of Invention and Eloqence do not lye open at all hours even to the greateſt Wits. There are ſome lucky Moments for compoſition that are not at our command; beſides, the difference of Age cauſeth ſome difference in the productions of the brain, as may be obſerved in the *Iliads*, and *Odyſſes*, of *Homer*; ſome Subjects being delightful, we are fond of them, and fall greedily to work; whereas others, becauſe dry and inſipid, do naturally cauſe in us ſome neglect. Nay ſometimes a Subject does even require a Man to deſcend from his uſual greatneſs, and to lay aſide all the pomps and loftineſs of Style. In a word, there are few Writers, how able ſoever, that can bear up with a conſtant and continued evenneſs. Therefore the Learned *Voſſius* was in the right to condemn *Maſſius*, for denying *Xenophon* to be the Author of the Expedition of *Cyrus*, becauſe the Critick, forſooth, did not obſerve in it all the ſtrokes of that unimitable Eloquence, which is the Character of that excellent Writer. For although, for the Reaſons we have hinted at, an Author may

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ſometimes deviate from his Character, yet notwithſtanding there will ſtill be diſcovered in his Style a tincture, as it were of himſelf, and a particular Air that is proper to no other but him. *Fannius* pronounced publickly in *Rome* an Oration, and there being ſome who envied the applauſe he had got, they gave out, that he was obliged for it to his Friends, who had help'd him in the making it. But * *Tully*, on the contrary, maintained that it could not be ſo, becauſe in the diſcourſe of *Fannius*, both the Style, the turn, and Harmony all over the ſame.

* *Cicero in Bruto. annus enim ſonus eſt totius Orationis, & idem Stylus.*

According to this ſuppoſition, we ought not to Father upon the true St. *Eucherius*, the Paſſion of the *Agaunian* Martyrs. For inſtance, let us but compare it with that excellent Epiſtle of his, upon the contempt of the World, and Worldly Philoſophy. Wherein his way both of Thought and Expreſſion; and indeed every thing is quite different from the former. One would take this Letter to be the product of *Auguſtus's* Age, when the Latin Tongue was in its greateſt purity, whereas the Style of the Paſſion of the Martyrs of *Agaunum*, taſtes like that of the Empire in its declenſion, and of the Age of *Caſſiodorus*. Mr. *Du Pin*, a Doctor of *Paris*, ſo much to be commended both for his diligence and ſincerity, hath without doubt, perus'd the Acts which Father *Chifflet* hath taken out of his Old Manuſcript. And ſee how he ſpeaks of 'em in his *Bibliotheca Nova*. *The Hiſtory*, ſaith he, *of the Paſſion of St.* Mauritius, *and of the other* Thebean *Souldiers, is not the Style of our St.* Eucherius.

Du Pin Nova Bibl. tom. pag. 175.

But perhaps we have been too favourable to this Relation of the Martyrs of *Agaunum*, in attributing it to the Age of *Caſſiodorus*. For in the Old Editions of St. *Eucherius*, Printed at *Rome*, and at *Baſil*, they have inſerted amongſt the Works of this Father, ſome Commentaries on *Geneſis*, and upon the Book of *Kings*, which ſeem to have been made not in *Caſſiodorus*'s time, but even ſince *Gregory* the Great, that is above an Hundred Years after, as appears by the Books of Morals of this Pope, being cited in theſe Commentaries. This Remark hath been made long ago, by *Poſſevinus*, and *Sixtus Senenſis*. And there is much more reſemblance between the Style and Character of theſe Commentaries, and the Style and Character of the Paſſion of the *Agaunian* Martyrs, than there is between the Letter of the contempt of the World, and the Relation of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*.

At Baſil *in* 1531. *At* Rome *in* 1564.

This Conjecture is ſtrengthened by the Epiſtle Dedicatory, prefixed to theſe Commentaries on *Geneſis*. It will be of ſome uſe to ſet it here. *Eucherius*, to the Holy and moſt Bleſſed Biſhop *Salvius*. *I have ſent to your Beatitude, the Hiſtory which I have written of the Paſſion of our Martyrs. I feared leaſt the Memorable Events of their glorious Martyrdom, ſhould have been buried in Oblivion, both by long tract of time, and the negligence of Men. I have endeavoured to know the truth from thoſe who are able to inform me of it, who have aſſured me, that they had the thing from* Iſaac, *Biſhop of* Geneva, *much after the ſame manner as I have related it. And I be-*

believe theſe things came to the knowledge of Iſaac, *by the means of the moſt Bleſſed Biſhop* Theodorus, *who lived in the former Ages.* Viro anterioris temporis. *And now whereas others from divers places, and even from the remoteſt Provinces, offer Gold, Silver, and ſeveral other things to the Honour of our Saints, we preſent them with our writings, if ſo be you vouchſafe to approve of them; and I beg for their ſakes the remiſſion of all my ſins, and for the future, the continual aſſiſtance of my perpetual Patrons. Remember us likewiſe in your Prayers, when you come before God, and do attend the Services of the Saints.*

There are ſeveral things very obſervable in this Letter. Firſt, that he who wrote it ſaith, that he is the Author of the Paſſion of the *Agaunian* Souldiers. Secondly, that the Monaſtery of *Agaunum* was Built a long time before, and was in great repute in the World, ſince Offerings were ſent thither from all parts. Thirdly, that this *Theodorus*, who is called there a Man of the former Ages, is in all probability the ſame *Theodorus* Biſhop of *Sion*, whereof we have ſpoken on the occaſion of the Council of *Agaunum*; which ſhews this Letter was written at leaſt in the Seventh Century, ſince that otherwiſe, this *Theodorus* could not be called *Vir anterioris Temporis.* Fourthly, that it mentions one *Iſaac*, Biſhop of *Geneva*, who is not to be found in the Catalogue, which *Leti*, and Mr. *Spon*, have made of the Biſhops of that place. and which they have taken out of an Ancient Bible of that City. Fifthly, that whereas in the

Bibliotheca Patrum, Printed at *Lions*, this Letter is placed immediately after the Paſſion of the Martyrs of *Agaunum*, the Editors who have taken care to advertiſe the Readers, that the Paſſion written by *Surius*, was not altogether Authentick, do not give the leaſt caution about this Letter, which is viſibly later by ſome Ages than St. *Eucherius*. Sixthly, that this Letter is inſerted at full length by *Baronius* in his Annals, as an irrefragable proof that St. *Eucherius* is the Author of the Acts of the *Agaunian* Martyrs, ſeeing it is brought there to ſerve as a Preface to it. Seventhly, that after you have read this Letter, when you come to the Acts of the *Thebean* Martyrs, you cannot perceive any difference. You find there much the ſame Matters, Style, and way of Expreſſion in both of them. Eighthly, that this Letter, in all the Editions of the St. *Eucherius*'s Works, is prefixed as a Dedication to the Commentaries on *Geneſis*, which have been compoſed by the Monks two Hundred Years after St. *Eucherius*, as appears by ſome places of the Morals of *Gregory* the Great being inſerted in them. Ninthly, that the Author of the Commentaries upon *Geneſis*, and the Book of *Kings*, is very probably the Author of this Letter. And that he who wrote the Letter, compoſed likewiſe the Paſſion of tht *Agaunian* Martyrs. Which leads us to this Obſervation, that perhaps we ſeek abroad for what we may find at home. I mean, that perhaps, the Acts of the *Thebean Legion* may be the growth of this Land, and the Work of ſome

Baron. an. ch. 297. pag. 734.

ſome *Engliſh* Writer. See how the pretended St. *Eucherius* ſpeaks in his Commentary upon the Book of *Kings*. *The Bleſſed Pope* Gregory, *Armed with an Evangelical Eloquence, governed then in our days the* Romiſh *Church, when the moſt Reverend Fathers,* Auſtin *and* Paulinus, *and their Companions, came into* England, *and Preached the word of God to a People, who had been Infidels for ſo many Ages.* Theſe words have given occaſion to the Learned Jeſuite, *Andreas Schottus* to think that the Author of theſe Commentaries, I mean the pretended St *Eucherius*, was not a *French* but an *Engliſhman*.

In 30. Comm. in Lib. Reg. c. 22.

Bibl Patr. tom. 6. p. 823. non Gallus homo ſed Britannus.

I do not know but one might ſtrengthen yet this Conjecture, by an Expreſſion which we have obſerved in the Acts of the *Agaunian* Martyrs, 'Tis ſaid there, that *Mauricius*, who commanded the *Thebean Legion*, exhorted the Senators of the Souldiers to ſuffer Martyrdom, *Senatores militum.* For though this Office is not altogether unknown, and ſtrange in the *Roman Militia*, and that St. *Jerom* ſpeaks of it in his Letter to *Pammachius*, nevertheleſs you will hardly find it in thoſe Authors, who write about military employments. Whereas this Expreſſion was common then amongſt the *Engliſh*, who uſed to give it to thoſe perſons who held the firſt rank, not ſo much in conſideration of their Age, as for their Wiſdom and merit. One may ſee in Mr. *du Cange*, the Examples he alledges of it, taken from the Laws both of King *Edward* the Confeſſor, and of *Kenulphus* King of the *Mercians*.

Hieron. Epiſt. ad Pammach. Deinde Senator, Ducenarius, Biarchus, Circitor, Eques, deinde Tyro. Gloſſar. du Cang. tom. 3. p. 796.

CHAP. IX.

That in Father Chifflet's *Copy, as well as in that of* Surius, *the Commander of a* Legion, *is called by a Name not then in uſe, and that there is a fault in the number of the* Legionary *Souldiers.*

BUT it matters not much, to know whether the Author of the Paſſion of the *Thebean* Souldiers, was *Engliſh* or *French*. Theſe two Warlike Nations will ſcarcely fall out with one another, for the Honour of having given him to the World. We muſt paſs now to other Remarks. 'Tis not only the difference in the Style, which ſhews that the Acts of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion* are not of the true St. *Eucherius*, but there are yet other manifeſt proofs of it. It appears from the Inſtructions which St. *Eucherius* gave to his Son *Salonius*, that this Father knew the uſe and propriety of *Hebrew*; but if he was the Author of the aforeſaid Paſſion, he muſt needs have been very ignorant even of *Latin* terms, though his Letter upon the contempt of the World, ſhews that he was a great Maſter of it. In the Edition of *Surius*, and of *Chifflet*, St. *Mauricius*, who Commanded the *Thebean Legion*, is called *Primicerius Legionis.*

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Can one imagine, that the true St. *Eucherius* did not know that the Commander of a *Legion*, was called *Præfectus Legionis*? Let any Body examine carefully all the Old Tombs and Monuments, which can give us any light into the Names and Titles of Military Offices, from *Auguſtus*'s time, to that of *Juſtinian*; let any Body read the *Notitia Imperii*, with *Pancirole*'s Notes; let any Body turn over the *Codes* of *Theodoſius*, and of *Juſtinian*, in which there are ſo many Laws concerning the Civil, as well as the Military Offices of the Empire; let any Body look over all the Inſcriptions of thoſe times which are commonly ſo full of Titles, and you will no where find that the Commander of a Legion was ever called *Primicerius Legionis*. The Reaſon of the Name is, that whereas formerly they made uſe of a Paper prepared with Wax, therefore they called *Primicerii* thoſe of their reſpective Orders who were ſet down firſt in the Publick Regiſters. Hence it is that ſo many of that Name are to be found amongſt the divers Orders of Dignities and Magiſtrates of the Empire. There was the *Primicerius* of the Imperial Chamber, of the *Wardrobe*, of the Liberalities, of Notaries, of the Court of Accounts, of the Golden Mace, of the Singing-School, of the Servants, of the Judges, of the Readers, and of many others, whoſe Names are ſeen in the *Notitia*, or State of the Empire. This term was alſo received into the Church in

Lazius Comm. R. Rom. lib. 3. c. 17. pag. 358.

Primicerii primi erant & anteſignani omnium. Dignitatum quod in tabula cerata primi notarentur.

Suidas πεϱιμμιχήϱειος πϱῶτος πῆς τάξεως τυγχάνων. *In nov. Heraclii.* ὁ ὢν ἐκάθητο τάγματι πϱώτης.

the following Ages. The dignity of *Primicerius* is very conſiderable in the Clergy of *Venice*. And in the Collection of the Councils by Mr. *Baluze*, this Name is given to one *Peter* a Prieſt of *Alexandria*. The Church writers have ſometimes made uſe of it Metaphorically, * calling St. *Stephen* Primicer of Martyrs, and St. *Peter* † the Primicer of the Apoſtles, and at laſt this term hath been appropriated to thoſe Prieſts who carry Wax Tapers before Princes and Prelates. But as for the Military Officers, I confeſs I cannot well underſtand what rank and command the *Primicerii* had there. *Lipſius*, and *Salmaſius*, don't give us much light thereupon in their Books of the *Roman-Militia*. 'Tis true, that *Goltzius*, in his Catalogue of Military Dignities, makes mention of *Primicerius Caſtrenſis*. But all the Learned do agree, that what *Goltzius* does relate, ought not always to be rely'd upon, for he writ this, as well as the reſt of his Books, upon other Peoples word, and without having ſeen himſelf the Medals and Inſcriptions which he goes upon. If *Goltzius* hath been miſtaken, we have found out methinks the cauſe of his Errour. In the Notice or State of the Empire, in the Chapter of the Civil and Military Dignities in the Weſt, we ſee one *Primicerius Sacri Cubiculi*, *Primicerius Notariorum*, *Caſtrenſis*, *Sacri Palatii*, &c. And perhaps he thought that before *Caſtrenſis* ought to be underſtood *Primicerius*, which might give occaſion to the Dignity of *Primicerius Caſtrenſis*, ſet down in his Catalogue. But had he minded another Chapter, wherein

Baluſius nov. Coll. Concil. pag. 480.

* *St. Auguſt. Serm.* 2.

† *Bodicus delonſis. Arch. in Hiſt. Hieroſ.*

Goltzius Theſ. rei antiquariæ pag. 149.

wherein an account is given of the Offices which were *ſub diſpoſitione viri ſpectabilis Caſtrenſis*, he would have obſerved that this Dignity, *Caſtrenſis*, related chiefly to the Sacred-Houſe which was the Emperour's Palace.

'Tis true indeed, that *Vegetius* ſpeaks of one *Primicerius*, *who after he had been a Prefect, and in the Prætorſhip, was raiſed to an Honourable and gainful Military Dignity*. His Commentators are ſilent upon this place, which yet ſeems difficult enough. But Mr. *de Valois* does not leave us quite in the dark about this matter, in his Notes upon *Ammian Marcelline*. For this Hiſtorian having ſpoken of one *Valentinus*, who was made a *Tribune* after he had been *Primicerius* of that Body which was called *Protectores*, Mr. *de Valois* obſerveth that from Primicer of Protectors it was uſual to be made a Tribune.

Veget. lib. 2. cap. 21. Sicut Primicerius in Officio Præfectorum prætorieq; ad honeſtum quæſtuoſumq; Militiæ pervenit gradum.

Ammian. Marcel. lib. 18. c. 3. Inter quos Valentinus ex Primicerio Protectorum Tribunus.

Valeſius pag. 190. Cæterùm ex Primicerio Protectorum ad Tribunatum prevenire mos erat.

And 'tis true, that *Ammianus Marcellinus* ſpeaks in his thirteenth Book of one *Gratian*, who after he had been made Primicer of the Protectors, and *Tribune*, was made ſuperintendant to the Military Affairs in *Africa*. Which place does explain that other in a Collection of the Acts of *Conſtantine*, where 'tis ſaid, that *Conſtantius*, Nephew to *Claudius* the Empe-

In Excerptis de Geſtis Conſtantini. Conſtantius D. Claudii opt. Principis Nepos ex fratre, Protector primum, exin Tribunus, poſtea Præſes Dalmatiarum fuit.

rour,

rour, after he had been first a Protector, then a Tribune, was at least created President of *Dalmatia*. But we don't find in all this, that in St. *Eucherius* time the Commander of a *Legion*, was called *Primicerius Legionis*. For it is only in the last Ages, that it was given to all those who had any Command. *Mathew Paris* in the Year 1240. speaks of an Army where it was demanded, who was the *Primicerius* of it, that is, who commanded it. So that as the term Commander in *English* is very general, and may be applyed to those, who either do command a Company, or a Regiment, or are Governours of Towns and Provinces; so likewise in the last Ages, in the which 'tis likely the Passion of the *Thebean* Souldiers hath been Forged, the quality of a Primicer had a very large signification; I am tempted to say, specially amongst the *English*, and from thence to make another conjecture, *viz.* That the Author of the Acts of *Agaunum* was an *Englishman*. We did just now cite *Mathew Paris*, who was a great Ornament to this Nation in the twelfth Century. There is an Act in the History of the *English* Monasteries, in the which the Kings, *Edmond*, and *Edgar*, qualifie themselves Kings and Primicers of all *England*, *Primicerii totius Albionis*. Therefore this Primicerian Quality being so general at that time, 'tis no wonder that *William* of *Tyre*, who lived about Fifty Years before *Matthew Paris*, does mention some *Legionary* Primicers.

Matth. Paris an. 1240. Scisciabantur in Exercitu quis foret Primicerius.

Monasticon Angl. Tom. 1. pag. 838.

Gulielm. Tyrius lib. 4. cap. 8.

Præcedebant autem ejus Exercitum quasi Legionum Primicerii, vexilla bajulantes viri Nobiles & inclyti.

Honour-

Honourable Men, ſaith he, *bearing Enſigns, went before the Army, as if they had been the Primicers of* Legions. If it can be inferred from theſe words, that the *Legionary* Primicers were the *Signiferi*, or Enſign-bearers of thoſe times, one ought to confeſs that in *William* of *Tyre* his time, things were very much altered, and that nothing can be concluded from this expreſſion that may authorize that in the Relation of the *Agaunian* Martyrs, unleſs one would confeſs that they ſuffered Martyrdom about the time of *William* of *Tyre*, to wit, many Ages after the true St. *Eucherius*. But let us examine what *Surius* Copy, and that of Father *Chifflet* tells us of the number of the *Thebean* Souldiers. That of *Surius* ſaith, that in the Emperour *Maximian's* Army, there was a *Legion* of Souldiers called *Thebeans, and that a Legion was made up of Six Thouſand, Six Hundred, and Sixty ſix Souldiers, according to the cuſtom of the Ancient* Romans. In Father *Chifflet's* Manuſcript, the number of Sixty and ſix, and what is ſaid of the cuſtom of the Ancient *Romans* is cut off, being ſaid only there, *that a Legion was then made up of Six Thouſand and Six Hundred Men.*

If by *the cuſtom of the Ancient* Romans, ſpoken of both in *Surius* and *Baronius's* Copy, was meant the Military Diſcipline anciently eſtabliſhed by *Romulus*, 'tis certain that in his time the *Legions* were compoſed only of three Thouſand Foot, and ſome Horſe. And let one look over all the times in which that Common-wealth flouriſhed, from the expulſion of Kings to *Julius Cæſar*, one

one ſhall obſerve many changes in the number of the Souldiers which compoſed the *Legions*, and that it was ſometimes leſſer, and ſometimes greater, according to the Exigencies and Revolutions of the Empire: But it will be a hard matter to prove, that there hath been a time, in which the *Legions* had preciſely the number of Souldiers ſpecify'd in thoſe two Copies.

Tit. Livius lib. 13. *Livy*, ſaith indeed, that it was a priviledge of the *Legions*, which were in *Macedonia*, to be compoſed of Six Thouſand Foot, and Three Hundred Horſe, the others *Ex veteri Inſtituto*, according to the Ancient cuſtom, being formed only of Five Thouſand Foot, and two Hundred Horſe. This great Author in all probability was better informed in the *Roman* Cuſtoms, than the Author of the Paſſion of the *Thebean* Souldiers. For the *Legions* having been raiſed to Five Thouſand Men in the *Roman* Wars againſt *Carthage*. *Polybius* obſerves that to his time, they ſtill retained the ſame number of Five Thouſand Foot, and Three Hundred Horſe. It cannot be deny'd, but the number of the *Legionary* Souldiers increaſed under the Emperours, ſince at the time of the Emperour *Tacitus*, the *Legions* were of Six Thouſand, One Hundred, and Twenty Foot, and of Seven Hundred, and Sixteen Horſe, which is a Remark of *Modeſtus*, in the Treatiſe he addreſſes to him of the Terms uſed in the Military Art. *Vegetius*, who Dedicated his Book to the Emperour *Valentinian*, tells us likewiſe, that in his time the *Legions* were of the ſame number. So that it would be

Polyb. lib. 6.

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an obligation to the Publick, to prove, by good Authors, that at the time of *Diocleſian*, and *Maximian*, in which it is ſuppoſed that the *Thebean Legion* ſuffered Martyrdom, the *Legion* were of 6666, or 6600 Men, as 'tis ſaid in the Copies both of *Surius*, and *Chifflet*.

CHAP. X.

That in the Editions both of Surius *and* Chifflet, *a Miracle is related which hath all the appearance of a feigned Story.*

IN the Acts of the *Agaunian* Martyrs, there is a Miracle ſet down that deſerves our conſideration. This Miracle hapned on the occaſion of a man, who in *Surius*'s Original was a Gold-ſmith by Trade, and in that of *Chifflet* a Black-ſmith or a Carpenter. 'Tis ſaid in theſe Acts that all the Chriſtians of *Agaunum* being Aſſembled at Church upon a *Sunday*, this Man, who was a Pagan, ſtayed alone in the new Church which was then a Building to the Honour of the *Thebean* Souldiers. Whereupon the Saints appearing to him in a bright and glorious Apparel, dragg'd him from the place where he was, ſtretched him as it were upon a rack, and having banged him ſoundly, reproached him with *his abſenting himſelf from the*

Aurifex. Faber.

the Church on the Lords-day, and that he being a Pagan, had been ſo bold as to work upon a Church which was Erecting to them. It is incredible that a grave Author, as St. *Eucherius* was, ſhould have made the Bleſſed Martyrs to ſpeak ſuch Nonſenſe. For it is an eaſie thing to infer from their diſcourſe, that the *Pagans* themſelves were obliged, even as *Pagans*, to obſerve the keeping of the Lords-day, and this is a Tenet which one can't by any means admit. For if the Fourth Commandment had obliged the *Heathens*, as well as the *Jews*, as the other Commandments of the *Decalogue* did, 'twould be a certain proof that the Duty enjoyned by the fourth Precept concerning the *Sabbath-day*, is a Duty Eſſentially Moral, of a Natural and inviolable Rectitude; and it would be a very intricate difficulty to juſtifie the Apoſtolick Church about the tranſlation of the *Sabbath* to the Day of the Reſurrection of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. When we diſpute againſt the *Sabbatarians*, one of the ſtrong Reaſons we bring againſt them, is, that the diſtinctive Character of the Laws Eſſentially Moral, is their extenſion and univerſality, that is, that they bind all ſorts of Perſons at all times, in all places, and under both Covenants. So that we conclude, that the obſervance of the Seventh Day is not a Moral Duty, ſince the fourth Commandment did not oblige the Gentiles; and I do not know, if the ſame thing may not be ſaid of our *Sunday*, which hath ſucceeded to the Rights of the *Sabbath*.

'Tis

'Tis true, that after Nature hath taught Men the exiſtence of a God, it may teach them further the reaſonableneſs of Conſecrating a ſetled time to his Service: But it can lead them no further, and will leave the choice of that time to their Liberty. Let it be the Fourth, the Sixth, or the Seventh Day, 'tis all one in the main. And to render the *Pagans* guilty in not keeping the *Sabbath*, either according to the *Jewiſh*, or Chriſtian Inſtitution, the *Sabbath* ought to be one of thoſe Duties that are as well known to us, as the firſt Principles inbred in our very Nature, at our coming into the World, and ingraved by the Hand of God in the Hearts of all Men. The *Agaunian* Saints were much in the wrong to uſe a *Pagan* ſo ſcurvily, under pretence of his not obſerving the *Sunday*. They ought firſt to have inſtructed him, to have ſet before him the excellency and Holineſs of the Chriſtian Religion, and ſhewed him how juſt and reaſonable it is to Conſecrate the *Sunday*, to the glory of Jeſus Chriſt, the Mediator and High-Prieſt of this new Law: And after this, had he been ſtubborn and Rebellious to their Charitable inſtructions and admonitions, then in Gods Name let him fall under the Cenſure. But to knock him down out of hand, this is a way of Converſion only known and practiſed in our Days in *France*, and which cannot be attributed to Saints, without a great offence to their Charity. It was an ordinary thing, indeed, at that time, to ſee the *Pagans* drag the Chriſtians by force to their profane Sacrifices, but not one Example of thoſe times can be produced

See Lock *of* Hum. Underſt.

duced of any Christians, in places where they had the power to do to it, tormenting the *Pagans*, and compelling them to come and joyn with them in their Worship. Nay, it seems that in those former times, they made some scruple of admitting *Infidels* into the places where their Holy Mysteries were Celebrated. For otherwise, to what purpose should the fourth Council of *Carthage* have Ordered the Bishops to suffer the *Pagans*, the *Jews*, and other *Hereticks* to enter their Churches, and hear the Word of God? 'Tis true, that it is added in that Canon, that they shall not be suffered to stay but to the Mass for the Catechumens, so that after the Sermon and Prayer for the Catechumens, the *Infidels* were obliged to withdraw, before the Celebration of the Holy Sacraments.

Con. Carth. 4. can. 84.

Another circumstance against the credibility of it, is, that, the *Agaunian* Saints do reproach this *Pagan, for his boldness in working upon the Church which was a Building for them.* Is it possible than an Author, so wise and knowing, as Sr. *Eucherius* was, should have put in the Mouth of his Saints such unbecoming reproaches! Saints are not certainly so nice as this comes to, I am sure God himself is not. For when *Solomon* was Building him a Temple, it does not appear that he found fault with him for sending for Wood and Stones from *Heathenish* Countries. And according to St. *Austin*, he would not have taken it ill, though all the Timber of his Temple had been cut down in the Groves Consecrated to Idols, *ex lucis alienorum Deorum.* When we reflect on the the prodigious

Aug. Ep. 154. ad Publ.

digious number of Workmen, who were employed in the Building of the Temple, we cannot but conclude, that many of the *Infidel* Neighbour Nations were alſo employed in it, and ſo much the rather, becauſe the *Jews* apply'd themſelves more to Husbandry, than to other Mechanick Arts. It was by God's Order, that the Gold and Silver of the Idolatrous *Jericho* were put into the Sacred Treaſury. Thoſe Tables and Precious Veſſels, and the other rich Preſents which *Ptolomy Philadelphus*, and Queen *Helena*, ſent to the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, were no doubt of the *Gentiles* making, nevertheleſs, they were accepted of by the High-Prieſts, and Conſecrated to the Service of the God of *Iſrael*. In what School then did the *Thebean* Souldiers Learn that piece of Morality, that it was not allowable in a *Pagan* to help in the Building of Chriſtian Churches? Certainly the *Romiſh* Church muſt think that Saints have now-a-days much abated of the ſeverity of their Morals, and are grown much more humane and tractable, ſince in the Cathedral in *Rome*, a Brazen St. *Peter* is ſeen which, formerly was a Statue of *Jupiter*, and in whoſe Hands the Keys were put, inſtead of the Thunder-Bolt and fiery Arrows that they held before; and ſince the *Pantheon*, which was the Temple Dedicated to all the *Heathen* Gods, is now a Church Conſecrated to the Bleſſed Mother of our Lord.

Joſue Ch. 5. 24.

Lightfoot. *Deſcript. Temp. Hier. ſect.* 4. *pag.* 649.

CHAP. XI.

In which the thoughts and diſpoſitions for Martyrdom, which are attributed to thoſe Saints in the Acts of Agaunum, *are Examined.*

WE muſt not forget, that the Hiſtorian of the *Thebean* Souldiers repreſents them all poſſeſſed with a burning Zeal for Martyrdom. He ſaith, *that they were all inflamed with a Noble deſire to die for Jeſus Chriſt, and that the Miniſters of the Emperour being arrived to put his barbarous Orders in Execution, the* Thebean *Souldiers made not the leaſt reſiſtance or endeavour to eſcape, but tendered their Necks of their own accord to the Executioners.* This was not ſet down without ſome deſign; the Author had a mind to anſwer before-hand, a difficulty which might be objected by the Readers. He fore-ſaw that it would not well go down with ſome conſidering Men, that a whole *Legion* well Armed, had ſuffered their Throats to be cut without making the leaſt oppoſition, and that theſe brave Souldiers who fought like Lions in ſo many Battels, ſhould have permitted themſelves to be led as Lambs to the Slaughter. But now he thinks he hath removed the difficulty, by ſaying that they were poſ-

poſſeſſed with a fiery heat, and a kind of fury for the glory of Martyrdom; as appears eſpecially, in that *Victor*, whoſe Death is related towards the end of the Acts of the Martyrs of *Agaunum*, who ſought for Death, and brought it upon himſelf by his own indiſcretion. For being invited by ſome *Pagan* Souldiers to come and make merry with them, with the ſpoils of the *Thebean* Souldiers, he returned their kindneſs with a Thouſand Imprecations and Curſes, and declared, without neceſſity, that he himſelf was a Chriſtian. But theſe things are not perhaps ſo certain, as to leave no manner of ſuſpicion behind them. 'Tis true, that we find in *Euſebius*, *Sulpitius Severus*, and *Lactantius*, many fine things ſaid upon the Noble Ardour of Chriſtians (in the primitive Ages) for Martyrdom. It cannot be denyed neither, but in the Church Hiſtory there are particular Examples of ſome who had more zeal than knowledge, and who in the time of Perſecution, when they might have made their eſcape, or hidden themſelves, choſe rather to run into the hands of their unmerciful Judges and Tormenters.

But here the caſe is otherwiſe, for we are not ſpeaking of ſome ſimple ignorant People, whom a blind zeal might carry too far in the firſt heats of Chriſtianity, but of a whole *Legion*, which they ſuppoſe had been well inſtructed by a Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, and confirmed in the Faith by Pope *Marcelline*. Amongſt theſe were a great number of Officers, who no doubt had a competent ſhare of Learning, and were ſuffi-

ciently inſtructed in Chriſtian Morality, as not being Chriſtians by their Birth and Education, but by choice. In the Archives of the *Metropolitan* Church of *Turin* is kept a Manuſcript-life of St. *Second*, one of the *Thebean* Souldiers, wherein it is ſaid that he was of one of the beſt Families of the Province of *Thebaide*, brought up in all the beſt accompliſhments, and by his extraordinary Merit, raiſed to a conſiderable Office in the Imperial Palace. Now if notwithſtanding all theſe fine qualifications, this St. *Secundus* was left out in the Acts of *Agaunum*, we may well think that *Mauricius*, *Candidus*, *Exuper*, *Urſus*, and *Victor*, who are mentioned there, ought to have been Men of tranſcendent Parts and Ability. Nevertheleſs, the Acts of their Paſſion do attribute to them, ſuch Thoughts as are quite contrary to the Principles and Morals of Chriſtianity. If the Author of theſe Acts was of opinion, that they ſhould have offended God by endeavouring to flye from the Orders and Cruelty of the Emperour, we need no other premiſes to conclude, that the true St. *Eucherius* is not the Author of this Relation. This Holy Biſhop well knew that Chriſt did ſuffer his Diſciples, when they were perſecuted in one place to flee to another. He knew undoubtedly very well, that true Religion ſtrengthned the Saints againſt dangers, but that it forbad 'em to ſtay for them, or to go meet them. A man that is throughly convinced of the truth of Gods promiſes, and hath experienced the Comforts of 'em, will certainly without any change,

change, or being in the leaſt daunted, look upon a fiery Furnace, but yet he will not run himſelf head-long into it. As we ought not to be afraid of Death, ſo neither are we to grow weary and prodigal of Life. *Ignatius* and *Albina* may ſerve as Patterns to Chriſtians of both Sexes, but not *Cato* and *Lucretia*. *The Crown of Martyrdom comes from the hand of God; we ought to wait for it without anticipating the time*, (ſaid St. *Cyprian* the great Panegyriſt of Martyrdom) the *Thebean* Souldiers had an excellent Model in St. *Paul* to frame themſelves upon; who being choſen by God to Preach the Goſpel to the Gentiles, feared neither Tribulation, nor Anguiſh, nor Perſecution, nor Hunger, nor Nakedneſs, nor Peril, nor Sword; he challenged Life and Death, Angels, Principalities, Powers, things preſent, and things to come, the heighth, the depth, and all the Creatures together, to ſhake his unmoveable ſteadineſs and fidelity. But withal he never faced the dangers, whenever it was in his Power to decline them, and made no ſcruple to turn aſide when he foreſaw ſome great miſchief in the way. An inſtance of which was his going out of *Damaſcus*, as you ſee in the 9. *Ch.* of the *Acts*.

Cypr. de lapſis. Nam cum Corona de Dei aſſignatione, &c.

This was alſo a known Practice in the time in which 'tis ſuppoſed that the *Thebean Legion* ſuffered Martyrdom. Let one but look over the Collection of Penitential Canons by *Peter* of *Alexandria*, who was in great eſteem about the time of the Perſecutions of *Dioclesian*. This

Biſhop does there Cenſure thoſe obſtinate Martyrs, who having opportunity to make their eſcape, ſought notwithſtanding for Death. *Chriſt*, ſaith, he, *withdrew himſelf to ſhun the malice of the* Jews *who laid in wait for him; and though he knew that the time appointed in the Counſel of his Father was not far off, he went not in ſearch after his Croſs, but waited for it from the fury of the* Jews *in a ſolitary place, whither he did retire. And when he foretold his Apoſtles of all the Perſecutions they were to ſuffer for his Names ſake, he told them that they ſhould be delivered to the Councils and Synagogues. Whereupon this Biſhop obſerves that Chriſt ſaid, they ſhall deliver you, and not, Ye ſhall deliver your ſelves.* For this reaſon Mr. *de Tillemont*, in his Hiſtory of the Emperours, makes this wiſe obſervation, ſpeaking of the Acts of St. *Maximus*, *That theſe Acts do appear very well deſerving the eſteem which* Baronius *had for them, though they do expreſs that this Saint delivered himſelf to Death, which is more uſually ſeen in ſpurious, than in true Acts.* In ſhort, one may ſee what were the Morals of the Ancient Church about this thing, from a Canon of the Council of *Eliberis*, and from a ſpecial place in St. *Auſtin*; and the ſame Morals may be ſeen practiſed in the Lives of St. *Cyprian* and *Athanaſius*, who fled from Perſecution whenever God gave them opportunity to do it.

Tillemont Hiſt. des Emp. 2. p. 3. tom. pag. 864.

Council Elib. can. 60. *Auguſt. in Breviar. collat. Di.* 3. *c.* 13.

All the buſineſs is then to examine whether the *Thebean* Souldiers, being informed of the Emperour's reſolution, might have prevented

ted it by their flight; and for the clearing of this point, we need only read the Acts of their Martyrdom. The Army of *Maximian* having paſſed the defiles of *Valeſia*, the *Thebean Legion* which was in the Rear, underſtood at *Agaunum*, that this Army was deſigned to cut off the Chriſtians in *Gaul*. They ſtopped at this News, and refuſed to March any further. Firſt every Body will agree that they might have diſbanded and betook themſelves to flight; for in ſuch caſes as this, Military Laws ought to yield to that of ſelf-preſervation, and then deſertion is not, it ſeems, a greater infraction of Military Diſcipline, than to refuſe to March at the Orders of the General. 'Tis further ſaid in the Acts, that *Maximian* being informed of the refuſal of the *Thebean* Souldiers, commanded them to be Decimated, hoping by the Death of ſome to terrifie the others into their duty. The *Legion* with an undaunted Courage ſuffered the Decimation, and the Miniſters who Executed the Emperours Orders, made their report to him, that the Rebellious *Legion* was nothing frighted by this Exemplary puniſhment, but perſiſted in their obſtinate reſolution not to March. During all this while, the Army is not ſeen to come back in Order to obſerve the Motions of this *Legion*; neither was it obſerved, that the Emperour did command any Troops to watch them, for preventing the ill effects of their mutinous diſpoſition. 'Tis very natural to think that if the whole *Legion* was not able to ſave all their Lives, part of them at leaſt might have got away, and

yet 'tis ſaid in the Acts, that not ſo much as one of them did eſcape the Emperours Cruelty. Whatever care is now taken to hinder the Deſertions in an Army, all the diligence and watchfulneſs of the Officers cannot hinder a great many Souldiers to run away from their Colours every Campaign; and what is yet worth our obſervation is, that the Situation of *Agaunum* afforded great facility to the *Thebean* Souldiers to flee away for their ſafety. I have paſſed my ſelf that way, when I went with the Corps of Duke *Schomberg* from *Turin* to *Lauzane*, where he had ordered me to Bury him. And having then ſome Thoughts of this Diſſertation, I ſtaid a good while to conſider the Avenues and Situation of *Agaunum*. It is ſeated at the bottom, and further end of a very narrow Valley, and there is no acceſs to it but by continual Defiles, having on both ſides Woods and high Mountains. So that, had the *Thebean* Souldiers taken advantage from the place, the whole Army of the Emperour had not been able to have hindred the greateſt part of them from making their eſcape. From this we may conclude, that the Author of their Acts hath not much obſerved the rules of Probability in the Romance he hath left us, ſince he ſaith, that all the *Thebean* Souldiers were Maſſacred, * not one of them caring to make his eſcape, but all with one accord chearfully holding up their Necks, and wiſhing for nothing ſo much as the glory of Martyrdom.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

That there is no likelyhood that a Legion *ſhould be ſent for from the* Eaſt *to ſuppreſs a Tumult of the* Gauls.

WE have hitherto conſidered the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, with Relation both to the Acts wherein it is contain'd, and to the Author to whom theſe Acts are attributed. 'Tis time now to come to the Fact it ſelf, and to treat it without any regard either to the Acts or their Author. Father *le Cointe* thought in his Annals to ſalve both the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, and the Relation of their Paſſion, by betaking himſelf to the Acts and to the Copy of Father *Chifflet*. *We do not deny*, ſaith he, *that the Acts of the Martyrs of* Agaunum, *were written by St.* Eucherius, *Biſhop of* Lions; *but we ſay that thoſe publiſhed by* Surius, *and which are found in the Manuſcripts of moſt Churches, are ſpurious, and falſly attributed to St.* Eucherius. *We acknowledge none to be true beſides thoſe publiſhed by* Francis Chifflet *in his* Paulinus Illuſtratus, *and the which he hath Extracted out of a very Ancient Manuſcript of St.* Claud's *Monaſtery. And we believe St.* Eucherius *to be the true Father of that Work.* But whether St. *Eucherius* be the Author

Le Cointe Ann. Franc. tom. 3. An. Ch. 636.

Author of that work, or whether he be not: whether the Acts be falſified in the Copy of *Surius*, and whether they be true in Father *Chifflet*'s Manuſcript, this is now no more the matter in queſtion. We have hitherto in a manner Attack'd only the Out-works, but we come now cloſe to the Fact, and will ſhew in it palpable Characters of falſity.

Acta Martyr. Agaun. Hi in auxilium Maximiano ab Orientis partibus accîti.

The firſt of which is this ſuppoſition, namely, that the Emperour *Maximian*, cauſed a *Legion* to be put Death, which he had ſent for from the *Eaſt* to go with him into *Gaul*. We don't deny but there were in the *Eaſt* ſome *Legions* call'd *Thebeans*. In the Book we have already cited of the Dignities of the Empire, mention is made of four *Thebean Legions*.

Sub diſpoſitione Viri illuſtris
Magiſtri militum per Orientem
Legiones Comitatenſes 9.

Secunda Flavia Conſtantia Thebæorum, ſecunda Felix Valentis Thebæorum.

And in another Chapter.

Sub diſpoſitione Viri illuſtris
Magiſtri militum per Thracias
Legiones Comitatenſes.

Prima Maximiana Thebæorum
Tertia Diocletiana Thebæorum.

We

We will not deny neither, but that the Exigencies of the Empire, calling *Maximian* into *Gaul*, the Emperour might have been attended by ſome of thoſe *Legions*. They are all four numbred amogſt thoſe *Legions* which the *Romans* called *Comitatenſes*.

* *Lazius Reip. Rom. lib. 3. comitabantur Auguſtum in proximum abeuntem.*

But our buſineſs is to Examine which was that *Thebean Legion*, whereof it is ſpoken in the Acts of the *Agaunians* Martyrs The Copies both of *Surius* and *Chifflet*, do agree that *Maximian* cauſed this *Legion* to come from the *Eaſt*. So that according to the pretended St. *Eucherius*, it cannot be either *Prima Maximiana Thebæorum*, or *Tertia Diocleſiana Thebæorum*, theſe two *Legions* remaining in *Thracia*, appointed to Guard thoſe Frontiers of the Empire. This *Legion*, then muſt have been one of thoſe which were under the Command of the General of the Foot in the *Eaſt*. But it is not very likely, that the Emperour ſhould have ſent for a *Legion*, ſo far to perſecute the Chriſtians in *Gaul*, or to quell a Sedition raiſed there. The *Legions* on the *Rhine*, on the *Danube*, in *Moeſia*, and in *Illyria*, were much nearer at hand. No Example can be ſhewed in Hiſtory, that to make War againſt the *Gauls*, Garriſons were drawn out of the Frontier places of *Egypt*, or *Meſopotamia*. Should it be replyed, that the *Romans* were at peace with the *Perſians* and that all things were quiet upon the Confines of *Africa* and *Aſia*, that the danger was preſſing in *Gaul*, that *Rome* did tremble at the firſt news of a Mutiny in thoſe parts, and at the bare naming of *Tumultus*

multus Gallicus, and therefore, that it ought not to appear ſo ſtrange that *Legions* were called from the utmoſt parts of the *Eaſt*. And ſhould it be added in confirmation of this Conjecture, that the danger ought to have been very great, ſince the Hiſtorians do obſerve that this was one of the reaſons which induced *Diocleſian* to divide the Empire with *Maximian*, to the end that being inveſted in the Imperial Dignity, and having a greater Authority, he might ſooner make an end of this buſineſs: All theſe replies make for us, by leſſening the probability of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*. For the War which *Maximian* was to undertake being of ſo great importance, it is not likely he would wilfully have deprived himſelf of a *Legion*, which he had ſent for from the extremities of the Empire. But ſuppoſe *Maximian* had been as Zealous as ever Emperour was, for the Service of his Gods, and as implacable an Enemy and perſecutor of Jeſus Chriſt and his Diſciples, yet after all, we ought not, without good reaſons, to make a mad Man of him, and ſo bad a Politician, as to imagine he would have commanded one of his beſt *Legions* to be Maſſacred in the very face, as I may ſay, of the Enemy, and at the beginning of a War, the ſucceſs whereof ought to have commended to the World the choice which *Diocleſian* had made of him: And by ſo much the rather, for what * *Aurelius Victor* ſaith of him, *viz.* That though he was but half a Courtier, yet he was a brave and skilful Warriour. Beſides this, if with Father *Labbe*, we refer

Sext. Aurel. Victor. Eutrop. lib. 9.

* *Aurel. Victor. quanquam ſemiagreſtem, Militiæ tamen atq; ingenio bonum.*

refer the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion* to the Year 286. 'tis like that at that time the State of Affairs did not permit that the Frontiers of *Egypt*, and of the *Eaſtern* Provinces, ſhould be unguarded; ſince it was not long after, that *Achilleus* took the Purple upon him, and that the *Quingentians*, or Inhabitants of the Five Towns, joyned their Forces againſt the Empire. And if this Martyrdom be placed in the Year 297. with Cardinal *Baronius*, I queſtion very much whether the War was not then raging upon the Frontiers of *Perſia*, and whether the Emperour *Galerius* had by that time repaired the Loſs of that unfortunate day, in which all his Army was defeated, and he himſelf had much ado to eſcape.

But now I come to ſomething more poſitive. The very Names which in the Book of the Dignities of the Empire, are given to thoſe *Thebean Legions* which were in the *Eaſt*, may ſuffice to ſhew that the Martyrdom here mentioned, cannot be applied to any of them. For one of theſe *Legions* is called *Secunda Flavia Conſtantia Thebæorum*. Where we are to take Notice, that the *Romans* gave different Names to their *Legions* for diſtinction ſake, as Princes do now to their Regiments. Theſe Names are ſometimes taken from the Order or time of their Creation, as the Firſt, Second, Third, and Fourth *Legion*. And ſometimes they were given upon the Account of ſome remarkable Action, whereby they had ſignalized themſelves, accordingly one was called the *Victorious*, another the *Conquering*,

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the *Iron Legion*, &c. Now and then they took their Names from the Countries and Frontiers that were committed to their charge, as the *Germanick*, and the *Pannonick Legions*, appointed to Guard the Empire in *Hungary* and *Germany*. Some of them had alſo their Names from the Countries where they had been raiſed, as the *Nervian*, and *Iſaurian Legions*. *Mezeray*, in his Hiſtory of *France*, before *Clovis*'s time, gives this very ſame reaſon for the Name of the *Thebean Legion*. *Maximian*, ſaith he, *having alſo taken upon himſelf the defence of* Gaul, *departed from* Nicomedia, *and took with him ſome* Legions, *and amongſt them that of the* Thebeans, *ſo called from its having been raiſed in* Thebais *of* Egypt. But moſt commonly the *Legions* bore the Names of the Emperours who had raiſed them; ſuch were the *Ulpian*, *Trajan*, *Claudian*, *Diocleſian*, and *Maximian Legions*. And it is moſt likely the two *Thebean Legions*, which were in the *Eaſt*, were of this laſt Order. For one of them was called *Flavia Conſtantia Thebæorum*, from the Name of the Emperour, *Conſtantius*. *Pancirollus* obſerves judiciouſly, that this ought to be underſtood of *Conſtantius*, Son to the Emperour *Conſtantine*, and not of *Conſtantius* his Father: only the Reaſon he gives for it is falſe. He ſuppoſes then, that *Conſtantine* the Great was the Firſt Emperour who added to his Titles, that of *Flavius*; and that moſt of his Succeſſors after him took the ſame likewiſe, as a mark of the eſteem they had for his Virtues, and of their deſire to bear ſome reſemblance with him. Mr.

Mezeray *Hiſt. before* Clovis, *&c. pag.* 218.

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du Cange, in his *Byzantine* Families, ſpeaks of ſome Medals of *Conſtantius*, Father to *Conſtantine*, with the Name *Flavius*, upon them. And Mr. *Baluze*, in his Notes on *Lactantius*'s Book of the Deaths of the Perſecutors, produces an Inſcription which he had from Mr. *Vaillant*, where this Emperour is inſcribed FLAVIUS VALERIUS CONSTANTINUS, ſo that we ſhould rather think that at the time when *Maximian* was raiſed to the Empire, and when he undertook his Expedition into *Gaul*, *Conſtantius*, Father to *Conſtantine*, had not ſufficient Authority to raiſe *Legions* in the *Eaſt*, and to give them his own Name. And ſince the other *Legion* was called *Secunda Felix Valentis Thebæorum*, from the Emperour *Valens* his Name, it follows that neither the one nor the other could poſſibly ſuffer Martyrdom by the Order of *Maximian*, who was taken into a Partner-ſhip of the Government ſeveral Years before *Conſtantius* and *Valens* came to the Throne.

Pancirollus ſeems to have been ſenſible of this difficulty, but finding no way to evade it, he falls with all his knowledge into pitiful contradictions. Inſtead of one *Thebean Legion*, which is ſuppos'd to have ſuffered Martyrdom, he relates the Paſſions of two *Thebean Legions*. He ſaith that the *Legio Secunda Flavia Conſtantia Thebæorum* was raiſed by *Conſtantius*, and put in the room of the Second *Thebean*, who were Chriſtians, and had been Maſſacred at *Treves*, by *Rictiovarus*, a Prefect of the Emperour *Maximian*; And as for the *Legio Secunda Felix Valentis Thebæorum*, *Pan-*

Guido Pancirol. Notit. Imper. cap. 48. *fol.* 34.

Pancirollus will have it, that the Emperour *Valens* raiſed it to make up the loſs of the *Legion* which periſhed at *Agaunum*, on this ſide of the *Alpes*, for refuſing to take the Military Oaths with the *Pagan* Ceremonies. That which led him into this Errour, was his having read in other Legends, that *Maximian* having paſſed the *Alpes*, made a Detachement of ſome *Cohorts* of the *Thebean Legion*, with ſome other Troops, to reinforce the Army wherewith he deſigned to oppoſe *Carauſius*. Thus this famous Antiquary of theſe few *Cohorts*, hath made an entire *Legion*. Which is ſo far from being true, that in the following Chapters the ſame *Thebean* Souldiers, who are now ſuppoſed to have been ſent againſt *Carauſius*, will furniſh us with new proofs againſt the Martyrdom of the whole *Thebean Legion*.

CHAP. XIII.

That if the Hiſtory of this Legion *were true, there would not be ſo much uncertainty of the time wherein it happened.*

ANother Character of falſhood, in the Hiſtory of the *Thebean Legion*, which deſerves our obſervation, is the uncertainty and contrariety of the Writers of the Church of *Rome*, concerning the time in which they ſuppoſe the *Thebean Legion* ſuffered. The Martyrdom of a whole

Legion

Legion is ſo Memorable an Event, that if it were true, it would certainly have been written and deſcribed in all its circumſtances in the Annals of the Church. And though the Eccleſiaſtical writers had been ſo negligent as to be ſilent therein, yet, *Aurelius Victor*, *Eutropius*, *Jordanes*, or ſome other Author, would undoubtedly have made amends for this Omiſſion. *Titus Livius*, failed not to relate the Tragical end of that *Legion*, whereof all the Souldiers were Condemned to Death for Mutining and poſſeſſing themſelves of *Rhegium*, during the War of the *Romans* with *Pyrrhus*. And yet ſome would have it, that Six Thouſand, Six Hundred, Sixty and ſix Officers and Souldiers, were Maſſacred by the Emperour's Order, upon their refuſal to ſwear by his falſe Gods, and to joyn with the other Troops that were Heathens, in ſhedding of Chriſtians Blood; though not one word is to be found either in Profane or Eccleſiaſtical Writers, whereby to diſcover the exact time of an Event, which ſo many circumſtances render ſo extraordinary and wonderful. Neither do the ableſt writers of the *Romiſh* Church agree upon the Year, the Pope, or the Conſul, under whom it happened. Cardinal *Baronius* puts their Martyrdom under the Pontificate of *Marcelline*, in which Errour he was followed by two Learned Fathers of the Oratory, Namely * *le Cointe*, and *Morin*. *Anthonius Pagi* refers this Martyrdom to the firſt Years of Emperour. The Jeſuite * *Labbe* forſakes here the Opinion of his *Baronius*, and 'tis he perhaps, whom *Anthonius Pagi* followed. His words are

* *Le Cointe Ann. Ch.* 638. *Morinus part.* 2. *cap.* 3. *de rebus a Conſt. geſtis.*

* *Labbe Chr. Hiſt. part* 1. *an. ch.* 286. *pag.* 216.

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theſe. *'Tis ſaid that about the Year* 286 Sebaſtianus Tiburtinus, Tranquillus, Marcellinus, Zeus, Mauricius, *and ſeveral others with the* Thebean Legion *ſuffered Death for the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt at* Agaunum, *at the entrance of the* Pennine Alpes This agrees very well with the Pontificate of *Cajus*, and the beginning of the Empire of *Diocleſian*. And whereas Cardinal *Baronius* refers the Martyrdom of the *Thebean* Souldiers to the Year 297. it happened according to Father *Labbe's* computation in the Year 286, *viz.* immediately after that *Carinus* was killed, and that *Diocleſian* had taken *Maximian* into the Government Which if true, what will become of Mr. *Ducheſne's* Argument in his Hiſtory of Popes, who to prove that Pope *Marcelline* did not Sacrifice to Idols in the time of Perſecution, as is moſt commonly believed, ſaith, that this Pope adminſtred the Sacrament of Confirmation to the *Thebean Legion*, when they paſſed by *Rome*, and earneſtly exhorted them to Piety and to perſeverance in Religion? Here *Labbe* and *Pagi*, put the Martyrdom of this *Legion* ſeveral Years before the Pontificate of *Marcelline* In the mean while we may take notice of the extraordinary fair dealing of this Jeſuite, who does not give us the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, as a thing whereof he himſelf is very well aſſured, and of which he hath found any Authentick Records and Proofs, but only with an, *It is ſaid, or given out*; and this no doubt he does, as being unwilling to vouch for

Ducheſne *Hiſt. of the Popes pag.* 45.

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a Relation which he found to be ſomewhat fabulous.

Now if it be reply'd, that it is not fairly done to deny a matter of Fact, meerly becauſe its Epoche is uncertain; it may be anſwered, that there is a great deal of difference between one Tranſaction and another; that there are in Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, ſeveral Relations of matters of Fact, concerning which this Argument would prove of no great force. But the Martyrdom of a whole *Legion* is a thing ſo extraordinary, ſo ſingular, and ſo remarkable in it ſelf, that the uncertainty of the time in which they ſay it happen'd, makes it very ſuſpitious. And for the ſame Reaſon ſeveral Perſon doubt of the Diſpute of St. *Peter* with *Simon Magus*, and of the ſurprizing Death of this wicked Man, whom the Devils let fall to the ground, after they had born him up for ſome conſiderable time in the Air. 'Tis true that *Euſebius*, *Sulpitius Severus*, and St. *Auſtin*, take Notice of this Memorable Event. But thoſe who believe it to be falſe, do reply that one ought not always to truſt to the Relations of the Ancient Eccleſiaſtical Authors, becauſe the Zeal they had for Religion, made 'em not always very Nice in the choice of Proofs and Examples; and ſometimes they had a mind to oppoſe one Miracle to another, ſeeing that the whole *Pagan* Religion was Built upon the Belief of Miracles, and the Apparitions of their falſe Gods. They add farther, that had this Event happened, as it is reported, it would have occaſioned ſo much Noiſe in *Rome*, and through the

whole Empire, that ſome Footſteps thereof would have been preſerved in the Writings of *Pagan* Authors. And that after all, though it was believed by *Euſebius*, *Sulpitius Severus*, and St. *Auſtin*, this does not make it leſs dubious, ſince thoſe three Writers do not agree about the time wherein it happn'd. *Euſebius* puts it under the Empire of *Claudius*, St. *Auſtin*, and ſeveral others, under that of *Nero*, about the Year of our Lord 67. and *Sulpitius Severus* refers it to the time when St. *Paul* came to *Rome*, towards the Year 57. And this is the very argument we urge againſt the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*.

CHAP. XIV.

That the Martyrdom of the Thebean Legion *cannot be referred either to a General, or to a Local and particular Perſecution.*

ANother Character of falſhood, yet more palpable, and in the very Fact, is this, that if the *Thebean Legion* ſuffered Death for being Chriſtians, this muſt have happened in the time of the General Perſecution, or of a Local and particular one. Now if we examine exactly all the afflictions and calamities that befel the Church under the Reign of *Dioclefian*, we find neither time

time nor room where to place the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*. For place it if you pleaſe with Cardinal *Baronius* in the Year 297. or put it in the Year 286. with *Labbe* and *Pagi*, what ſide ſoever you take, you ſhall never make it fall in with the General Perſecution, which happened in the Year 303. according to the Opinions of the Learned * *Henry Noris*, Mr. *de Valois*, and Mr. *Baluze*. *Riccioli* a Jeſuite, in his reformed Chronology finds fault with *Baronius* and *Petau*, for placing the beginning of it in the Year 302. and Remarks that *Onuphrius* hath been more exact in his Computation, who makes the General Perſecution to begin in the Month of *March*, and in the Year 303. *Samuel Petit* hath thought fit to put it off to the Year 304. in his Summary Collections of Chronology, where he ſaith, that the difference about the Celebration of *Eaſter*, cauſed this Perſecution to begin ſooner in one Country than in another; and that the Emperour *Diocleſian* (the better to ſurprize the Chriſtians, and to make the Effects of his rage both the more certain and dreadful) commanded they ſhould be Maſſacred on *Eaſter-day*.

* *Henr. Noris Epoch. Syron. Diſſ.* 3. *p.* 143. *Valeſius in Notis ad cap.* 2. *lib.* 8. *Baluſius in Notis Lactantii Riccioli Chr. Ref. lib.* 4. *cap.* 10. * *Petrus* 3. *Eccl. Chron.* 54

But though the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, could be made to agree in point of time with the General Perſecution, yet this would not remove all difficulties, ſince 'tis poſſible this Perſecution might not reach ſo far as the Country where it is ſuppoſed that the *Thebean* Soldiers ſuffered. However, notwithſtanding the Diverſity of Opinions about the circumſtances of their Martyrdom, all the Writers who

have handled this Matter, do agree, that the Country of *Valesia*, and the Neighbourhood of *Agaunum* had their Soil Honoured with the effusion of their Blood. Now the business is, to know whether that *Canton* was not of *Gaul*, and in the Division of *Constantius*. *Aurelius Victor* does clearly decide the Question, saying, that in the partition of the Empire, *Constantius* had for his share all the *Gallick* Provinces beyond the *Alpes*; and one need only cast his Eye upon the Map, and he will find that *Agaunum* is beyond the *Alpes* in respect to *Rome*. In the Book which we have already cited of Dignities of the Empire, Notice is taken of the Seventeen Provinces of *Gaul*, and amongst them the *Alpes* called *Grajæ* and *Penninæ* are comprehended. Now it is certain, that the Ancient *Agaunum* was situated in these *Alpes*, which were Inhabited by a People called *Veragri*. And therefore, *Briet* the Jesuite, a Man so very well seen in Ancient and Modern Geography, puts in the Fifth *Viennese* *Octodurum*, which is now the chief City of *Valesia*. This Fifth *Viennese* included most part of the *Alpes* called *Grecian*, and *Pennine*, and belonged to *Gaul*, by the Division which the *Romans* made of the Provinces of the Empire. Morever, Father *Pagi* proves that these *Grecian* *Alpes* were none of the Five Provinces, which composed the Ancient Province of *Narbonne*, and that they were in *Gaul* at the time when the Province of *Narbonne* was separated and joined to *Italy*.

Aurel. Victor quæ trans Alpes Galliæ sunt Constantii sunt commissa.

Brietus parall. Veter Geogr. & Novæ pag. 374.

Ant. Pagi Crit. Hist. Chr. p. 218.

Seeing

Seeing then that the Country of *Valeſia*, where *Agaunum* ſtood belonged to the *Gauls* at that time, and was then under the Government of *Conſtantius*, this will ſuffice to ſhew that the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, cannot be placed in the time of the General Perſecution. Mr *Boſquet*, Biſhop of *Montpellier*, and Mr *Dodwel* in his Diſſertations upon St *Cyprian*, have made it out, that *Conſtantius Chlorus* was the only Prince of all thoſe that had then a ſhare in the Empire, who never Perſecuted the Chriſtians. And of this great moderation of his, the *Donatiſts* were not wanting to take Notice, in their Humble Addreſs to *Conſtantine*, hoping thereby to incline him to mildneſs, and a Toleration of their Sect. Likewiſe *Euſebius*, in the Life of the Emperour *Conſtantine*, relates one of his Edicts, in which he gives this Commendation to his Father, that of all his Colleagues in the Empire, he only left the Chriſtians in Peace and unmoleſted. 'Tis true indeed, that yielding to the neceſſity of the times, he complyd ſo far with the two other Emperours, as to permit the Chriſtian * Temples in his Diviſion to be demoliſhed; But *Lactantius* obſerves that he took care that no harm ſhould be done to their Perſons.

Boſquet Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 4 c. 11.

Dodwel Diſſ. Cypr. 11.

* *Verum autem Dei Templum quod eſt in hominibus incolume ſervavit.* *Lactant de Mort. perſec. lib. 15.*

For this Reaſon, the defenders of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, will be forced to have recourſe to ſome Local and particular Perſecution, which muſt have been raiſed againſt the Church ſome Years before the time of the General One. But then they ought to mark out to us, out

of ſome good Authors both the places and times of theſe Local and particular Perſecutions. For we are a little too hard of Belief for the Legend-writers; nor can we ſwallow the Relations of things ſaid to have been done in the Second and Third Centurys when there is nothing produced in confirmation thereof but Lives and Paſſions compoſed by Monks, who lived ſome Eight or Nine Hundred Years after. And yet it would be no eaſie matter to find any one of that Order, who refers the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion* to a particular Perſecution, which only raged in ſome ſingle Country. They have all ſpoken of it, after the ſame manner as *Matthew* of *Weſtminſter* hath done, who places this Martyrdom in the Year 303. and ſaith, *that it was at that time that the* Thebean Legion, *made up of Six Thouſand, Six Hundred, Sixty and ſix Souldiers, ſuffered Death courageouſly for the Faith of Chriſt.* According to the Chronology of this *Benedtine* Monk, the *Thebean Legion* ſuffered in the time of the General Perſecution; and he joins this Event with the Martyrdom of St. *Alban* and other *Engliſh* Saints; though it is not true neither, that *Conſtantius* permitted theſe violences to be done in *England*; and beſides, *Gildas*, and *Polydor Vergil*, place their Martyrdom in the Year 305. In the mean while it is worth our Obſervation, that the Manuſcript ſo much commended by Father *Chifflet*, is different from that which *Matthew* of *Weſtminſter* made uſe of, for it is ſaid in that as well as in the Copies which *Surius* and *Baronius*

Matth. Weſtm. pag. 67.

ronius followed, that the *Legion* was compoſed of Six Thouſand, Six Hundred, Sixty ſix Souldiers. We don't pretend however, to deny that there have been ſome Local Perſecutions before that Fatal interview of *Diocleſian* and *Valerius*, at *Nicomedia*, where theſe two Emperours reſolved the General Perſecution. For we do agree with the Learned *Theodorus Ruinart*, that ſometimes the Governours, the Judges, and the *Pagan* Prieſts in their turns, raiſed ſome Perſecutions, here and there, in ſome or place or other of the Empire. But we ſay, that it cannot be referred to any of the Local Perſecutions, which are found in Church Hiſtory. If it could be applied to any particular one, it muſt be to that which was raiſed at *Rome* (and in which *Baronius* relates that St *Sebaſtian* ſuffered Martyrdom) rather than to any other. But of this the Cardinal obſerves, that it extended not much further than *Rome*, and conſequently not ſo far as the *Alpes*, and to *Aganum*. In ſhort, before the time of the General Perſecution, we find ſome Chriſtians Condemned to Death in ſome parts of the Empire; but before the unhappy Congreſs at *Nicomedia*, 'ts not poſſible to ſhew any-where, during the whole Reign of *Diocleſian*, any ſuch Maſſacre as that of a whole *Legion*.

Theod. Ruinart, in Præf. contra Dodwellum.

Baronius an. Ch. 286.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

That the Martyrdom of the Thebean Legion *cannot be reconciled with the Hiſtory, and Years of the Emperour* Maximian.

THE Character of Forgery which we have diſpatched in the Precedent Chapter, will appear yet more Evident, by conſidering further, that 'tis ſuppoſed that the *Thebean Legion* ſuffered Death by Order of *Maximian*; whereas there is no room for this Martyrdom, either in the Life or Years of this Emperour. The Copies of *Surius* and *Chifflet*, and all the Legend-Writers who have followed them, agree in this, that this Emperour cauſed the *Thebean* Souldiers to be put to Death in an Expedition which he made into *Gaul*. Accordingly then a place muſt be found for their Martyrdom in ſome of *Maximian's* Voyages, on the other ſide of the *Alpes*. *Lactantius*, in his Hiſtory of the Deaths of the Perſecutors, makes mention of three of them. The Firſt, was occaſioned by the Marriage of his Daughter *Fauſta* with *Conſtantine*, to whom he gave the Title of *Auguſtus*, he having had only that of *Cæſar* before. He was forc'd to undertake the Second to ſhun the fury of his

his Souldiers, who were extreamly incenſed a-gainſt him, for deſigning to deprive his Son *Maxentius* of the Empire, by whom he had been reſtored to the Purple, which he had freely Abdicated before. And he came the third time into *Gaul*, at his return from his Journey into *Hungary*, whither he went, but unſucceſsfully, to Sollicite *Diocleſian* to reſume the Government; and it was then that *Conſtantine*, perceiving the ill Deſign he had formed to deſtory him, thought it neceſſary to prevent him, and cauſed him to be ſtrangled. But the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, does not anſwer to any of theſe Expeditions, ſince they are all poſterior to the Year 306. and all Hiſtorians agree, that the General Perſecution at that time began to abate in the *Weſt*. Beſides, it is certain that *Maximian* in none of theſe Progreſſes paſſed the *Alpes* with an Army, and that his Fortune and the poſture of his Affairs at that time, did not put him into a condition to deprive himſelf of a whole *Legion*.

Where ſhall we then find a fourth Expedition of *Maximian* into *Gaul*, in which this Emperour might be ſuppoſed to have Murthered the whole *Thebean Legion*? There is none left but that which is mentioned by *Eutropius*, and *Aurelius Victor*. Theſe two Hiſtorians agree that ſome Troops of *Banditi* or *Rapperees*, who were called *Bagauds*, having raiſed a Tumult in *Gaul*, and put themſelves under

under the Conduct of *Amandus* and *Aelianus*, *Diocleſian* made *Maximian* his Partner in the Government, and ſent him in all haſte with an Army to puniſh thoſe Rebels. But the time of this Expedition is not agreed upon. Father *Petau* relates at large the different Opinions of the Learned concerning it, in his Book of the Doctrine of times. He thinks that *Maximian's* Reign began in the Year of our Lord 285. *Diocleſian* being then Emperour, and veſted the ſecond time with the Tribunitian Power; and he confutes *Baronius* who was led into a miſtake by a paſſage of *Mamertine*. Mr. *Baluze* affirms, that *Diocleſian* having been raiſed to the Empire on the 20 of *November* in the Year 284. took *Maximian* into the Government on the Firſt of *April*, in the Year 285. and ſets it down as a point univerſally agreed in Hiſtory, that the Twentieth Year of *Maximian* ought to anſwer his Eighth Conſulſhip. From whence he concludes, that *Diocleſian* Reigned Twenty Years, Five Months, and twelve Days; and *Maximian*, Twenty Years, and a full Month. So that if this Calculation be juſt, the beginning of *Maximian's* Reign ought to be reckoned from the Firſt of *April*, in the Year 285. Father * *Pagi* followeth the Author of the *Alexandrian* Chronicle, and having placed the beginning of *Diocleſian's* Reign on the 17*th* of *September* in the Year 284. he adds that *Maximian* was Created *Cæſar* on the 20 of *Novemb.* the ſame Year.

Petau de Doctr. Temp. lib. xi. cap. 31.

Baluz. in Notis ad Lactant.

* *Pagi an. 284. num. 3. p. 112.*

Pagi Diſſert. hyp. cap. 2. num. 8.

Eutro-

Eutropius, and *Aurelius Victor*, are different in their Expreſſion concerning the Character which *Dioclesian* gave to *Maximian*, when he ſent him into *Gaul* againſt the *Bagands*. *Eutropius* ſaith, *Herculeum Cæſarem miſit*, and *Aurelius Victor* ſaith, *Imperatorem jubet*. Which difference occaſioneth another Diſpute amongſt the Criticks, *viz.* Whether *Maximian* was made firſt *Cæſar*, and then *Auguſtus*, according to the uſual Cuſtom; or whether both the Dignities were conferred on him at one and the ſame time. *Anthony Pagi*, and *Henry Noris*, differ onely in the time, in which they ſuppoſe *Maximian* was raiſed to the Dignity of *Auguſtus*; and they are of Opinion that before this he was made *Cæſar*. But though both of them are great Maſters, and ſeem able to pronounce upon this Matter, yet Mr. *Baluze*, in his Notes on *Lactantius*, is for the contrary, and alledges ſeveral Laws from whence he gathers, that *Maximian* was firſt Created *Auguſtus*. Againſt which Opinion of his, a Medal of *Francis Angeloin's* inſcribed NOBILIS CÆSAR, and on the Reverſe PRINCIPI IVVENTVTIS, was thought to make very much. But this difficulty the famous Mr. *Cuper*, in his Notes on *Lactantius* hath removed. Where he obſerves, that this Medal ought to be referred to *Galerius Maximianus*, by reaſon that ſeveral of his are found with the ſame Inſcrip-

ſcriptions, which are not upon any of the Medals of *Herculeus Maximianus*, Collected by *Counte Mezabarba*.

But the Subject we have before us does not require that we ſhould trouble our ſelves about theſe Chronological queſtions. We are in ſearch of the time when *Maximian* took another Journey into *Gaul*, not mentioned by *Lactantius*. Now the difficulty is not to find out that time, ſeeing it is circumſtanced both in *Eutropius*, and *Aurelius Victor*, by two Memorable Events; one of which is his Exaltation to the Empire, and the other the *Bagaudian* Revolt under their Leaders *Amandus* and *Ælianus*. Both which do ſhew, that he undertook the *Gallican* Expedition in the Year of our Lord 285. to Wit, at the beginning of his Reign, and above Eighteen Years before he took his other Journies ſpoken of by *Lactantius*. But our buſineſs is to examine, whether we can fix the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion* to that time. And the Diſpute is at an end, if we give Credit to thoſe Acts of the *Agaunian* Martyrs, which both *Surius* and *Baronius* have followed. For there mention is made of the *Bagauds*, of *Amandus* and *Ælianus*, of *Maximian*'s Aſſumption to the Empire, and of his Expedition into *Gaul* with the *Thebean Legion*. All which does agree well enough with the time we have aſſigned for the ſame Expedition. And it

ſt is ſtrange, that Cardinal *Baronius*, who hath followed the Acts of *Surius*, and ought conſequently to have joined the time of the *Bagaudian* Revolt, with that of the Death of the *Thebean* Souldiers, hath, notwithſtanding this, placed their Martyrdom in the Year 297, *viz.* Twelve Years after *Diocleſian* had taken *Maximian* into the Government, and ſent him into *Gaul* to ſuppreſs the Rebellion of *Amandus* and *Ælianus*. And ſince theſe two Events fell out ſo well to the purpoſe, one would wonder Father *Chifflet* ſhould be ſo tranſported, upon his finding a Manuſcript in which there is not a word ſpoken of the *Begauds*, nor of *Amandus* nor *Ælianus*, if it were not that King *Sigiſmond* unluckily appeared there alſo amongſt the reſt. For as theſe two concuring Events very much favoured the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, ſo what is there related of St. *Sigiſmond* made it evident, that St. *Eucherius* could not be the Author of the Acts of that Martyrdom, ſince he Dyed ſeveral Years before this Prince came into the World. *Bollandus* thought he might ſave the Credit of this piece, prove it to be the work of this Holy Biſhop of *Lions*, and remove the Anachroniſm, by ſaying, that there was formerly a Monaſtery at *Agaunum*, and that King *Sigiſmond* only repaired and beautified it. But becauſe it is but a poor ſhift, deſtroyed both by the Acts of *Surius*, and the Accounts which all the Hiſtorians give of that Martyr-

tyrdom, Father *Chifflet* was overjoyed upon his finding a Manuſcript, wherein not the leaſt mention is made of King *Sigiſmond*, or of the *Bagaudian* Inſurrection. We have already declared how good an Opinion we have of Father *Chifflet*'s integrity, which we don't pretend to retract. Nevertheleſs, if he be not the Man who hath helped this place out of the Acts of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, no Body ought to find fault with us, if we ſuſpect that ſome others might have conjured it away. Whatſoever may be the Antiquity of Father *Chifflet*'s Manuſcript, ſure it is that Impoſtors are yet much ancienter than it. Now I hope Father *Ruinart* will not except againſt us, for making ſome advantage of the Advice he himſelf gives in his Anſwer to Mr. *Dodwel*, *viz.* *That the Collectors of the Acts of Martyrs have frequently added too, and lop't off ſuch things as they did not like.*

Theod. Ruin. Praf. in Act. Mar. alii roſecuerunt non nulla quæ in illis Actis diſplicebant.

But let us come now to the Matter it ſelf, and examine whether the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, can be made to fall in with *Maximian*'s fourth Expedition into *Gaul*, mentioned by *Eutropius*, and *Aurelius Victor*. The Emperour *Dioclesian*, fearing leſt the *Gallican* Revolt ſhould be of dangerous conſequence, aſſumes him into the Government, to the end, that by his aſſiſtance he might with more eaſe to himſelf undergo the weight of it; He raiſes an Army with all ſpeed to

ſuppreſs

ſuppreſs this threatning Inſurrection in its Birth; then it is ſuppoſed that he ſent for the *Thebean Legion* from the *Eaſt*, to ſerve in the Expedition. And yet they needs will have it, that having paſſed the Mountains with them, and in a manner facing the Enemy, ſuch a Frenzy of ſuperſtition on a ſudden ſeized him, as made him weaken his Army by the Martyrdom of this whole *Legion*. We took Notice before, that the Author of this Romance was not very cautious in obſerving the Rules of probability. But becauſe ſome things may be true, though they do not ſeem very probable, we ſhall therefore add ſomething of more weight than meer Conjectures, for the proof of our Aſſertion.

Firſt then, let a Man be never ſo little verſed in *Roman* Hiſtory, he will find no ground there to believe, that *Maximian*, being but lately admitted to a ſhare in the Empire, ſhould by his own ſingle authority cut off a whole *Legion*. For though *Dioclesian* had made him *Auguſtus*, yet were they Maſters in Common, and joint ſharers of the Provinces, Arms, and *Legions* of the Empire. *Galeſius* and *Conſtantius* were the Firſt that ſhared the Empire. This the City of *Rome* took very ill, looking upon it as a diminution of its Power and glory. But this ſharing of the Empire ending in the Victories which *Conſtantine* got over all his Competitors, *Rome* became again the Miſtreſs of the Univerſe. Whereupon the Poet *Porphyrius*, in a Poem which he compoſed in the 15*th* Year of this Prince, has theſe words.

Eutrop. lib. 10. *Diviſuſq; inter eos Romanus Orbis. Oros. lib. primi Imp. Rom. in duas partes determinavit.*

— — — — — lacera cruentis
Imperii pars feſſa Poli, diverſa gemebat
Sceptra, & Auſoniæ mœrebat perdita jura.

During the Diviſion of the Empire, each Emperour acted as he pleaſed in his own Diſtrict, and was under no obligation to Communicate his Affairs and Conduct to the other Emperours; whereas when the Empire was poſſeſſed jointly by two or three Emperours, they Conſulted one another in all Affairs of Importance, becauſe each had an equal right to the whole, *Æquo Jure*, as *Eutropius* ſaith, ſpeaking of *Marcus Aurelius*, and of *Lucius Verus*. Whence we may judge, if it be poſſible in reaſon to ſuppoſe, that *Maximian* would of his own head have Commanded a whole *Legion* to be put to Death, and without ſo much as Conſulting *Diocleſian*, have allarm'd all the Chriſtians throughout the Empire by ſo violent a Perſecution. 'Tis true indeed, if the loſs of a whole *Legion*, cut off by the Command of a Cholerick and Enraged Prince, were to be look'd upon as a trifling matter, and of no conſquence to the State, there would have been no great need for *Maximian* upon this occaſion, to have ask'd the Advice of his Colleague; but I queſtion much, whether any conſidering Perſon will think it ſo.

Eutrop. lib. 7.

Secondly, Let us reflect upon what the Hiſtorians tell us of the Reign of *Diocleſian* and

and *Maximian* till the time they begun to perſecute the Chriſtians, and we ſhall find that they repreſent thoſe times to us, as times of Eaſe and Plenty, and they ſpeak of their Government as managed with Clemency and Moderation. *Matermin* tells *Maximian*, that no ſooner had the Light of his Government ſhined upon the Empire, but it overſpread all places with peace and ſecurity. *Euſebius*, in the 12*th* and 13*th* Chapter of the 8*th* Book of his Church-Hiſtory, cannot forbear making frequent mention of the Happineſs, which both the Church and Empire enjoyed before *Dioclesian* and *Maximian* had reſolved to Exterminate the Chriſtians. *Who can expreſs* (ſaith he) *the Proſperity and Plenty which the Empire enjoyed, ſo long as thoſe who Governed were well and kindly affected towards us. He had ſaid before, we want Words to expreſs the great value and eſteem which the Doctrine of our Bleſſed Saviour met with amongſt the* Greeks *and* Barbarians, *and the perfect Liberty and Tranquility which the Profeſſours of it enjoyed before the Perſecution which was raiſed againſt the Church in our Days. The particular affection the Emperours ſhewed towards thoſe of our Religion, and the Honour they did them, in conferring upon them the Government of Provinces, without obliging them to Sacrifice to their Idols.* And a little after he adds. *Who can recount the great numbers of thoſe who came over every Day to make profeſſion of our Faith; how*

Mamert. in genethlia ſub finem. Ut vero lucem gentibus extuliſtis, exinde ſolita rei ſpiritus jugiter manant.

Euſeb. lib. 8. cap. 12. and 13.

many Churches were Erected in every City, and in what Crowds came People to pay their Homage to God; insomuch, that the Ancient Buildings proving too narrow to receive them, it was necessary to have others built more large and capacious. Neither could the Envy of Devils, or Malice of Men, put a stop to this Progress of Christianity, so long as the People of God were not unworthy of his Almighty Protection and Favour. But when the excessive Liberty we enjoyed, had slackned the strictness of our Discipline; so that we begun to make War amongst our selves with abusive and bitter Words; and Bishops Incensed against Bishops, raised dissentions and disorders; in a Word, when Malice and Couzenage were come to their height, then Divine Justice lift up his Hand to punish us, First gently, as it useth to do, and permitted those amongst the Faithful, who made profession of Arms, to be Persecuted first. Now, who can believe that the *Thebean Legion* was Massacred at the time here described by *Mamertine* and *Eusebius*? Can any one Style that a Reign of Peace, Meekness, and Felicity, in which above Six Thousand Six Hundred Persons were at one time inhumanly Murthered? 'Tis supposed that *Maximian* Commanded them to be put to Death, upon their refusal to Sacrifice to Idols, and yet *Eusebius* told us just now, that both *Diocletian* and *Maximian* conferred

the

the Government of Provinces on Christians, without any obligation to Offer Sacrifice. It was then the Custom amongst the *Romans*, that the Proconsuls, the Govenours, and other Magistrates should Sacrifice to the Gods, to the safety and Genius of the Emperours, and should be present at all the publick Sacrifices Offered to them; which is the Reason, that the first Christians shunned those Employments as very dangerous baits, and occasions of Sin. But their Exemplary integrity being without doubt a motive to the Emperours, to desire they might be employed in places of publick Trust, *Eusebius* observes, that they acquitted them from the obligation of doing Sacrifice, (as Mr. *de Valois* Reads that passage out of the Manuscripts of the *Medicean*, and the *Mazarine* Libraries) 'Tis true, that *Eusebius* saith, *that the Faithful who made profession of Arms were Persecuted first.* But this cannot be apply'd to the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion.* For it is supposed that this *Legion* was Barbarously Massacred; and *Eusebius* speaks of a Persecution, whereby God did only *Gently* and *Modarately* chastise the Church. But certainly the Martyrdom of a whole *Legion* cannot be called a light and gentle Chastisement.

περὶ τὸ θῦειν, περὶ τὸ θύειν.

μετρίως.

But Thirdly, these last Words of *Eusebius* shew clearly, that it is not possible to make the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, fall in with *Maximian*'s Expedition into *Gaul*

againſt the *Begauds*. *Euſebius* having ſaid expreſly, that the faithful who made profeſſion of Arms were Perſecuted firſt, we need only find out the time when that Perſecution againſt the Souldiers begun. For if it was in the Year 285. we may ſuppoſe, indeed, that the *Thebean Legion* was then Condemned to Death, ſince it was about that time that *Maximian* was taken into the Government, and cauſed the *Legions* to March into *Gaul*, to ſuppreſs the Rebelion of *Amandus* and *Ælianus*, as *Eutropius*, and *Aurelius Victor* relate. But what will they ſay, if the Perſecution of the Souldiers did not begin till above Twelve Years after that time. Father *Pagi* places it in the Year 298. and Mr. *Dodwel* in 301. whoſe Reaſons may be ſeen in his Diſſertations upon St. *Cyprian*. But without entring upon theſe Diſputes of Chronology it will be ſufficient to prove that the Perſecution of the Souldiers happened ſeveral Years after *Maximian's* Expedition into *Gaul*. Now the Account which *Lactantius* hath given, both of the time and occaſion of the Perſecution of the *Thebean* Souldiers, leaves no place to doubt of it. He ſaith, that *Dioclesian* being anxious about the Succeſs of the War againſt the *Perſians*, which he had left to the Conduct of *Galerius*, Conſulted the *Aruſpices* concerning the Event thereof, and adds, that the Inſpector having told him, that the preſence of the Chriſtians hindred him from making any Diſcovery in the Entrals of the Victims, the Emperour thereupon Commanded that the Souldiers ſhould Sacrifice to the Idols, and upon refuſal

Anth. Pagi ad an. Ch. 298.

Lactant. de Mort. Perſec. cap. 10.

fuſal ſhould be drawn out of their reſpective Ranks, and Disbanded. Mr. *Baluze*, on this place of *Lactantius*, ſaith, that *Euſebius* hath very well obſerved, that the Perſecution begun with the Souldiers; and that really none but thoſe who ſerved in the Army were at firſt Perſecuted. We ought eſpecially to obſerve that *Lactantius* ſaith expreſly, that the Emperours Anger and Fury againſt the Souldiers proceeded no further at that time than to Caſhier them. Which Act of his, *Euſebius* calls a puniſhment; for amongſt the *Romans* to be Caſhiered and turned out of the Army, was accounted a great ſhame and diſgrace, as *Hirtius* tells us, ſpeaking of the *African* Wars. However, *Euſebius* is in the right, to call this Ignominy a *light and gentle Puniſhment*, in compariſon of the other Evils which the Chriſtians ſuffered ſome Years after. Therefore * *Sulpitius Severus*, after having ſaid that *Licinius* contending for the Empire with *Conſtantine*, Commanded the Chriſtian Souldiers either to Sacrifice to the Idols, or to lay down their Arms, adds, *but we don't reckon this amongſt the Perſecutions, as being too inconſiderable a thing to deſerve a place amongſt the Wounds which the Church received.* Had the *Thebean Legion* ſuffered Martyrdom at that time, they would certainly have been reckoned among the Souldiers who ſuffered Perſecution; and becauſe ſo great and remarkable an Event as this could not have eſcaped the knowledge both of *Euſebius* and *Lactantius*,

Lactant. de Morte Perſecut. cap. 10. *Etiam milites cogi ad nefanda Sacrificia præcipit, ut qui non paruiſſent militia ſolverentur. Hactenus furor ejus & ira proceſſit.*

Hirtius lib. 3. *de Bello Africano.*

* *Sulpitius Sever. lib.* 2. *pag.* 387. *Sed id inter Perſecutiones non computatur. Adeo res levioris negotii fuit quam ut ad Eccleſiarum vulnera perveniret.*

Lactantius, 'tis not likely the latter would have ſaid, that the Emperours did only at firſt Caſhier the Souldiers, and the former would not have called this Perſecution a light and gentle Puniſhment. And ſince 'tis agreed on all hands, that thoſe who made profeſſion of Arms were Perſecuted firſt, 'tis manifeſt that the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion* cannot be referred to the Expedition which *Maximian* made into *Gaul*, to ſuppreſs the Revolt of *Amandus* and *Ælianus*. For *Maximian* undertook this Expedition ſome Months after his Admiſſion to the Government, about the Year 285. and the Perſecution of the Souldiers, according to *Lactantius*, did not begin till a long time after. The ſame Author ſaith, that the *Perſian* Wars did then take up all the thoughts of the Court; whence it follows, that this Expedition did not happen till after he had ſettled his Affairs in *Egypt*, and ſeverely puniſhed thoſe who had followed the party of *Achillæus*, and at the time when he was putting himſelf into a Condition to be revenged upon *Narſes* King of *Perſia*, who taking advantage of the Revolt of *Egypt*, made irruptions into *Armenia* and *Meſopotamia*. Which hapned ſeveral Years after *Maximian's* Advancement to the Empire, and his *Bagaudian* Expedition.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

That it is not true, that the Bagauds *were Christians, and that the* Thebean Legion *suffered death for refusing to persecute them.*

IT will not be amiss to take notice here of an Objection, which may perhaps be made against us, *Viz.* That it is true that the Persecution mentioned in the precedent Chapter did not begin till near the year 298, or 301; But that *Maximian* was oblig'd to cut off the *Theb. Legion* upon another account, which was, that those People who had revolted, and went under the nickname of *Bagauds*, being Christians, the Emperour was afraid least the *Theb. Souldiers* who were of the same Religion, should joyn with the Rebels, and therefore he thought it the best course he could take to get himself thus rid of them, and that This was the chief, and indeed, the true cause of their Martyrdom. Here we are to consider what *Mezeray* saith in his second Book of the Origin of the *French* concerning this matter. These are his words. *After* Carinus *at his departure from* Gaule *had drawn thence all his Legions to go and encounter* Diocletian; *the Provinces, being freed from the Troops that kept them in awe attempted likewise to shake off the heavy Yoke of settled Taxes, and the arbitrary extorsions of their Governours: Which lying*

Mezeray Hist. de France avant Clovis liv. 2. pag. 219.

heavieſt upon the Countrey people, they took up arms firſt. Ælianus and Amandus, two Officers in the Roman Army, were ſo unwiſe as to put themſelves at the head of them. Such ſlaves as were hardly uſed by their Maſters, joyned with them; ſome came into this Party of their own accord, and others were ſurpriſed into it, ſeveral were ſollicited, but moſt of them ſcorned the invitation. This Riſing was call'd Bagaud, and the followers of it Bagauds or Bagaudians. Which word (as ſome ſay) ſignifies Revolt, and perhaps a Revolt of ſuch as lived in the Woods, according to the Etymology of the word from the Ancient Celtick Language. For it is likely that thoſe People having no other Fortreſſes and Places to retire to but Woods, they there intrenched themſelves after the manner of the Germans and Ancient Gauls. There were many Woods without doubt in ſeveral places of that Countrey, but the chiefeſt and biggeſt of them was two Leagues from Paris on the River Marne, in a place where now ſtands the Abbey of St. Maur, called des Foſſez, or of the Ditches, becauſe they had digged up a very ſpacious Trench to incamp there. Moſt of them were Chriſtians. And who knows, but that after ſo many horrid Perſecutions which they had ſuffered, their patience did turn at laſt into a juſt fury in arming them both againſt the Torments, and their Tormentors. Maximian taking a review of his Troops near the Town of Aoſte on this ſide of the Alpes, the Theb. Legion refuſed to take the Oaths with the Ceremonies uſed amongſt the Pagans, and being encouraged by the Speeches of their Tribune Mauritius, choſe rather to undergo two or three Decimations, and at laſt to be all cut to pieces, then to defile themſelves by thoſe abominable Rites.

Gaud in the old Gallick language, in low Britiſh goüer, & in High dutch wald ſignifie Wood.

Rites. The whole Legion was not there, ſome Cohorts having been detached, who, as we ſhall ſee hereafter in another place, ſignaliz'd themſelves by a like Victory. So many brave Men who deſpiſed Death would have ſold their lives to the Romans *at a very dear rate, if it had not been more glorious to die for the Faith, which they profeſſed, than to fight for it. I ſay further that they would have ſtrengthened very much the* Bagaudian *Party, had their Religion permitted them to diſſemble till they had joined them. However* Maximian *having defeated ſome of theſe* Bagauds *and received others into his favour, and by this means having divided them, he beſieged their great Intrenchment both by Land and by Water, with ſo great Vigour and Reſolution, that at laſt he took it. All thoſe who were found in it were put to the Sword without exception; and their ſtrong works were ſo entirely ruin'd and demoliſh'd, that nothing of them but ſome few Ditches remained We are to believe, ſaith the Author of the Life of St.* Baboulene, *that theſe Men being Chriſtians, and deſpiſing their lives for the ſake of their Religion, paſſ'd through Martyrdom to the Kingdom of Heaven; and though we have not their Acts in writing, nevertheleſs their Memory and Names ſhall never be blotted out of the Book of Life.* Theſe are the new Weapons wherewith M. *de Mezeray* furniſhes the Aſſerters of the Martyrdom of the *Theb.* Legion. Now all theſe difficulties we are very deſirous to remove, the better to clear this piece of Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory. Firſt then it is ſuppos'd in the Objection, that moſt part of the *Bagauds* Army were Chriſtians, and that the Emperour *Maximi-*

an cauſed the *Theb.* Legion to be cut off, for fear ſo many brave Men ſhould joyn with and ſtrengthen the Rebels. Then it is ſaid, that this Objection is taken out of an Ancient Anonymous Writer, who hath given us the Life of St. *Baboulene*, and who ought therefore to be credited, by reaſon that theſe Tranſactions happened in an Age nearer to his, than to our times. Our Anſwer to this will not a little contribute, I hope, to diſcover the Falſhood of the Martyrdom of the *Theb.* Legion.

And *Firſt* in this Account of *Mezeray*, ſupported by the Authority of that Anonymous Writer, we find the Chriſtians divided in their Practice upon a very conſiderable point of Morality. For ſome of them leaving the Plow take up Arms againſt their Sovereign, and others on the contrary being up in Arms lay them down, and patiently ſubmit to the Execution of the barbarous Orders of their Prince. Now to what ſhall we aſcribe this difference in their Judgment and practices? Was it that the Morality on the other ſide of the *Alps* differ'd from that of the *Gauls*? Or muſt we attribute the cauſe of this difference to the diverſity of their Climates, Educations, Tempers and Manners? But we ſhould ſpend too much time ſhould we go about to untye this knot, therefore the ſhorteſt way is to cut it, and to affirm poſitively, that both theſe Matters of Fact are falſe. And when all is done, if all that is here alledged were true, the Honour of Chriſti-

Chriſtianity would rather looſe than get by it. The Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion* is aſſerted, becauſe it is thought very honourable to Chriſtianity; but then to ſupport the Aſſertion, an Inſurrection of the firſt Chriſtians in *Gaule* is brought in, and a rebellious Conſpiracy to ſhake off the Yoak of their Maſters. So that if thoſe who ſet up for the defence of an Obedience ſo intirely paſſive, have, in the Example of the *Theb.* Souldiers a *Legion* of Martyrs to boaſt of: Thoſe, who on the contrary believe, that there are ſome Caſes and Times, in which Patience ought to give place to other Vertues, ſhall find in the *Bagaudæ* a whole Army of Chriſtians, in Rebellion againſt the Empire, to oppoſe to that *Legion*: And ſhall the Example of one ſingle *Legion*, be of more Weight and Conſideration, then that of a whole Army?

Secondly, *Sulpitius Severus*, ſpeaking of the perſecution which * *Marcus Aurelius* rais'd, againſt the Chriſtians, *ſaith*, *That that was the firſt time that Martyrs were known to have ſuffered in* Gaule, *Chriſtianity having been received ſomewhat late beyond the* Alpes. From which words we may very reaſonably infer, That it is not likely that when *Diocleſian* admitted *Maximian* to a Partnerſhip in the Government, the Chriſtians were ſo numerous as to form an Army. But if to deſtroy this conſequence, and the Authority of *Sulpitius Severus*, it be reply'd, that there is no likelyhood that the Goſpel was preached ſo late in *France*, a Country ſo near adjoining to *Italy*, ſince in the

Sulpitius Severus, *lib.* 2. *pag.* 283. * *ac tum primum inter* Gallias Martyria *viſa, ſerius trans* Alpes *Religione ſuſcepta.*

time of *Marcus Aurelius*, the Apoſtles and their Diſciples had publiſhed it in the moſt diſtant parts of the World; we will oppoſe nothing to this Anſwer, that may any way detract from the Antiquity of the *French* Churches. For beſides, that this would carry us too far beyond our purpoſe, the Perſecution, which their unworthy Poſterity have raiſed againſt us, ſhall never leſſen that high and juſt reſpect and veneration, we have always had for the firſt Churches of the *Gauls*. But ſuppoſe it were True, that St. *Luke*, St. *Philip*, St. *Paul*, *Creſcent*, and ſome other Diſciples of *Chriſt* did Preach the Goſpel in *Gaule*, and let it be ſuppos'd likewiſe, That it is not without ground that *Vienna*, *Lions*, *Aix*, *Narbonne*, *Sens*, *Paris*, *Reims*, *Limoges*, *and Toulouſe*, do boaſt of having received the Chriſtian Religion from the Apoſtles, and Apoſtolical Men, yet all this would not ſuffice, unleſs we ſhould alſo further ſuppoſe, that theſe firſt Preachers left there both Succeſſors and very great numbers of Converts. Nay, indeed it ought to be made out, That their Preaching proved very effectual, and made conſiderable progreſs every where. But if none but well approved Acts muſt be truſted, this matter will prove of greater difficulty than may at firſt be imagined. The Aſſembly of the *French* Clergy having ordered *all the Biſhops to ſend* Memoirs *to the Meſſieurs of St.* Marthe, *concerning the Foundations and Antiquity of the Churches of their* Dioceſes; theſe learned Men made to theſe Memoirs ſeveral Additions and Diſcoveries of their own, and at laſt

laſt cauſed thoſe large Volumes of theirs, of Chriſtian *France*, to be Printed: 'Tis true we find in them, that the Chriſtian Religion was Preached in *Gaule* very early by the Apoſtles and their Diſciples; and we believe, That in that reſpect, the Titles of the *Gallican* Churches are as good as thoſe of many other Churches that flatter themſelves with the like belief of their having been honoured with the Preſence, and the Preaching of ſome or other of the Apoſtles, who came there in Perſon. But if you ſtrictly and *impartially* conſider the Works of *Meſſieurs de* St. *Marthe*, after the Apoſtolick Age, you fall into a kind of Wilderneſs, a large waſte of almoſt 250 years, fill'd up with nothing but fabulous Legends and uncertain Traditions, except the Relations of ſome few Martyrs, as thoſe of *Lions*, who ſhine as Stars, in ſo profound and long a Darkneſs, all the reſt being made up of nothing but groundleſs Suppoſitions, or Acts that may eaſily be proved to be ſpurious. I have by me the Original Copy of the Memoirs, which *Artus de Lion* Biſhop of *Gap* ſent to Mrs. *de* St. *Marthe*, written by himſelf, and ſigned with his own hand. Where he proves, that St. *Demetrius*, Diſciple of the Apoſtles, was Biſhop of *Gap*; and gives two Reaſons for it; the *Firſt* is, That before the Proteſtants had pull'd down the Epiſcopal Palace in the year 1577, there were ſeen upon the Walls of the great Hall, the Images of the Biſhops of *Gap*, and that St. *Demetrius was at the head of them with theſe Words*, *Saint* Demetrius *the*

First Biſhop of the Church of Gap, *and Diſciple of the Apoſtles:* And that by the Grace of God they had yet an Eye Witneſs of it in their Chapter, namely Mr. *Paul* of *Bauvais*, who when he wrote theſe things, was in the hundredth year of his Age. The other Authority he produces is taken out of a Berviary, which *Bertrand* of *Champeaux* Biſhop of *Gap*, cauſed to be Printed in the year 1499, where St. *Demetrius* is placed in the *Calender* on the 26th of *October*, with the Character *of Biſhop and Martyr*, and the Word *totum Duplex*, which according to the uſe of the Church of *Gap* ſignifies the ſame as (*according to the uſe of the Council of* Trent) *Duplex primæ Claſſis*, which is proper to the Feſtivals of *Patrons* and *Titulars* of Churches. After theſe ſo ſpecial and convincing proofs, who would venture now to deny that St. *Demetrius*, Diſciple of the Apoſtles, did plant the Faith in the Dioceſs of *Gap*? That *Breviary* of *Gap*, Printed in the Year 1499. is a curious Piece indeed. We read there in the. 8th Leſſon of St. *Demetrius's* Office, ſpeaking of the *Etymology* of that Saint's Name, *that* Demetrius *ex eo dictus, quia de Medio, id eſt, de Mundo triumphavit:* And in the fourth Leſſon, that the City of *Gap*, having been taken by the *Sarazens*, Count *William beat them out of it, and gave the half thereof for the Redemption of his Soul, to God and to the Bleſſed Virgin* Mary, *in the Year of our Lord* 86, *on the Kalends of January, in the fifth Indiction.* Though it is well known to every body that the

uſe

uſe of the *Indictions* did not begin till three Hundred Years after Chriſt, and that the *Sarazens* did not make Inruptions into *Gaule* till ſeveral years after. Should we come to Examine narrowly the traditional *Origins* of moſt *Gallican* Churches, we ſhould not, I think, find much more ſolidity in any of them. And eſpecially we may obſerve that after the Firſt Age, there happened to that kind of Traditions ſuch an Eclipſe, or Diſcontinuation, that they do'nt appear again till after the time of the General Perſecution. And yet notwithſtanding, if we believe *Mezeray* and take his Anonimous Writer's bare word for it, the Chriſtians made a figure great enough at that time in *Gaule*, to raiſe whole Armies againſt the *Emperours*.

However, there is no need of ſtraining very much for to preſerve to the Churches of *France* their Antiquity, and to *Sulpitius Severus* the Authority he deſerves in a matter of this nature. For though the Apoſtles and their Diſciples had preached the Chriſtian Religion in *Gaule* very early, yet this bleſſed Seed, as well as that in the Parable, was ſoon after choak'd by thorns, and ſprung not up again till a long time after, ſo that it was very late before it came to any conſiderable Maturity there. *Gregory* of *Tours* gives us this way of ſaving both the Authority of *Sulpitius Severus*, and the Antiquity of the *Gallick* Church, who ſaith, *that about the Year* 250, *under the Reign of* Decius, *the City of* Toulouſe *had* Saturnine *for its Biſhop, and that he came from* Rome *with ſix others*

others to preach the Goſpel in Gaule, *Viz.* Gatian *at* Tours, Trophimus *at* Arles, Paul *at* Narbonne, Dionyſius *at* Paris, Aſtremonicus *at* Iermont, *and* Martial *at* Limoges Theſe are then the new *Evangeliſts* ſent in the time of *Decius*, to re-kindle the Light of the Goſpel in *Gaule*, which had been ſo long extinguiſhed there. From whence it may be gathered that the Chriſtian Religion had not then made any great progreſs amongſt the *Gauls*, ſince in the Year of our Lord two hundred and fifty there was need to preach it a freſh there, and even at *Narbonne* and *Arles*, Citys rather belonging to *Italy* then to *Gaule*, and which *Sulpitius* meant not to ſpeak of, if we may believe Father *Pagi*. How is it poſſible then to imagin that four Years after the Reign of *Decius*, the Chriſtians ſhould be ſo multiply'd in *Gaule*, as to be in a condition to make up vaſt Armys, and thoſe ſo formidable as to ſtrike a terrour into *Rome* it ſelf, and to perplex its *Emperours*. This they would fain perſwade us, by Aſſerting peremptorily, that the *Bagauds* were Chriſtians, and that *Maximian* deſtroy'd the *Theb.* Legion for no other reaſon, but becauſe he was afraid They ſhould joyn with them.

Pagi. 214. Galliarum *nomine antiquam Narbonenſem Provinciam minimè comprehendit.*

But Thirdly, They are at a very great loſs for Arguments to prove the Martyrdom of their *Theb.* Legion, when they are forced to this ſhift of ſuppoſing thoſe *Bagauds* to have been Chriſtians. For they caſt no ſmall blemiſh upon the Ancient *Gallican* Church, who fix ſuch a Character upon her Sons; & beſides they are very much unacquainted with the

Morals

Morals of the Chriſtians of thoſe Primitive Ages, who think they were capable of ſuch injuſtice and violences, as the *Bagauds* ſtand charg'd with in Hiſtory. Therefore *Mezeray* receiving the *Bagauds* into the Church, thought fit to clear them from theſe odious Aſperſions and to juſtify their proceedings. *Who knows*, ſaith he, *but that having ſuffer'd ſo many horrible Perſecutions, their Patience turn'd at laſt into a juſt Fury, in arming themſelves both againſt the Torments and the Tormentors.* *Bucherius* endeavours likewiſe to excuſe them ſaying, *That the* Bagauds *were moved to a Rebellion which was in a manner juſt, by reaſon of the Cruelty's and Tyranical Impoſitions of their Governours.*

Mez. *Hiſt. of* France *before* Clovis *lib.* 2. *pag.* 219.

Aegidius Bucherius Belg. Rom. *num.* 6. *pag.* 220.

Salvianus did the ſame before them, whom perhaps they have both followed.

Bagaudas *ad Rebellionem tum ferè juſtam Præpoſitorum ſuorum acerbitatibus & tyrannicis inciatas.*

He ſaith, *That the* Bagauds *oppreſſed by their unjuſt Judges, loſt all reſpect for the Majeſty of the Empire, becauſe they had been Stript of the* Rights *and* Priviledges *of Roman* Liberty.

Savl. *lib.* 5. *De provinciâ inceperunt eſſe Barbari quia non permittebantur eſſe Romani.*

In ſhort, the Emperor *Auguſtus*, the better to procure himſelf the good Affection of the *Gauls*, had granted to ſome of them the *Roman*, to others the *Latine*, and to others again the *Italic Laws* and *Liberties*. Whence *Salvian* took occaſion to ſay: *We call the* Bagauds *Rebels and Profligate Villains, when 'tis we that have hurried them into theſe Outrages. For how came they to be* Bagauds, *but*

but by our own injuſtice, by our proſcriptions of their Perſons, and violent Uſurpations of their Eſtates; and this is the effect of their being condemned to death and hang'd for the Robberies of their Judges, That they are now become like Barbarians, *becauſe they were not ſuffered before to live like* Romans.

That Prieſt of *Marſeilles*, who wrote about the year of Our *Lord* 495, adds ſeveral other things, whereby the Crimes and Violences which were imputed to the *Bagauds* are laid to the Charge of the Governours of the *Gauls*, of their Judges and of the Collectors of the Taxes. But he never ſpeaks the leaſt Word, from whence we may conclude, that the *Bagauds* were Chriſtians, but on the contrary, his way of ſpeaking on their behalf ſhews plainly enough, that they did not profeſs the Chriſtian Religion, we need only compare his Apology with thoſe of *Athenagoras*, of St. *Auſtin*, of *Tertullian*, and eſpecially of *Arnobius*, who lived at the time of the *Bagaudian* Revolt. Theſe Fathers ſpeak of nothing ſo much as of the Piety, Meekneſs, Charity and Innocence of thoſe happy Ages of the Church. Whereas *Salvian* Apologizes for the *Bagauds* by excuſing their Crimes of Injuſtice, Violence and Rebellion. Were that true which *Mezeray* ſaith of them, perhaps *Eutropius* and *Aurelius Victor*, would have told us ſomething concerning their Religion. *Proſper* might alſo have taken ſome notice of it, ſince he makes mention of them in his Chronology; ſo likewiſe *Eumenius* in his Panegyrick, wherein he informs us, that the *Bagauds* having beſieged *Autun*, that City implored

Eumenius in Paneg. de ſchol Fuſt.

implored the Emperour's Aſſiſtance. But it is moſt incredible that *Marmertine* would have been ſilent in this Matter in the Panegyrick, which he made at *Treves* in praiſe of the Emperour *Maximian*. Mr. *Cuper* ſaith, that he made it in the year 288. The Learned *Henry Norris* puts it a year later, in his curious Diſſertations upon the Medal of *Diocleſian* and *Maximian*. However it be, *Mamertine* made this publick Speech but few years after the defeat of the *Bagauds*; wherein he endeavours to quicken his diſcourſe by drolling upon their Army; and makes a meer jeſt of it: *That a Crew of ignorant Ruſticks ſhould pretend to the Exerciſe of Arms, and Military Diſcipline; that the Plowman ſhould change his Goad for a Pike; the Shepherd leave his Flock to turn Trouper; and that the Husband-man ſhould plunder and waſte his own Eſtate, and deſtroy the Fruits of his own Labour with as little concern as the moſt Barbarous Enemy would have done.*

Cuper *Notæ in La. p.* 145. H. Noris *Diſſ. de Num.* Dio. Mammer. *in Paneg. pag.* 91.

Cum Militares habitus ignari Agricolæ appetiverunt. Cum Arator Peditem, cum Paſtor Equitem, cum hoſtem barbarum ſuorum Cultorum Ruſticus Vaſtator inſtitutus eſt.

From which ſharp and pungent Expreſſions, One may give a ſhrewd Gueſs at what he would have added, had the *Bagauds* profeſſed the Chriſtian Religion. Preſident *Fauchet* is One of the *French* Writers, who hath made the greateſt diſcoveries in the *Gallick* Antiquities. But it does not appear, that he was of Opinion, that the *Bagauds* were *Chriſtians*; for *he ſaith* of them. *The* Gauls *being overburdened with publick Subſidies and Taxes roſe up in Arms in the year of our Lord* 290 *or thereabouts, under the conduct of* Amandus *and* Ælianus,

Fauchet *lib.* 1. *Antiq. Gall.*

lianus, *and took the Name of* Bagauds, *which ſome ſay, ſignifies in the old* Gallick *Language, Forced Rebels or Traitors, and ſome are of Opinion, that they were all Peaſants, and will have it, That the VVord* Bagaud *ſignifies Tribute; the heavy Taxes being in ſome parts of* France *not many years ago, called* Bagoges. *Theſe troubles were appeaſed by* Maximian, Diocleſians *Partner in the Empire.* Joſeph Scaliger, *ſaith, That* Bagaud *is not a* French *VVord, but the Name of a Faction or People, and that ever ſince the time of* Diocleſian, *the* Highway-men *and* Robbers *were call'd Bagauds.* Which agrees with what *Aurelius Victor* ſaith, That *Amandus* and *Ælianus* gathered together great numbers of *Peaſants* and *Robbers.* And that which ſhews it to be the Name of a Faction or Party according to *Joſeph Scaliger*'s Obſervation, is, that *Idacius* in his Chronology ſpeaks of the *Bagauds*, who mutined in *Spain* in the Province of *Tarragonia*, under the Kings *Rechila* and *Theodoricus.* 'Tis alſo very likely, that they wandred from one Countrey to another as the Hordes of the *Tartars* do. This Conjecture is ſeconded by what *Proſper* tells us of a Phyſician nam'd *Eudoxius*, *who took ſhelter in the* Bagaud, *which then had changed Station.* And becauſe perhaps they lived in Tents, their Name might well be derived from thence; ſince *Amerbachius* remarks that formerly the Tents were call'd *Baugas.* *Menage* in his *Origines* of the *French* Tongue ſaith, That *Ciron* fetched the term *Bagaud* from the *Greek* Βαγεύειν, which ſignifies in *Suidas* to live a Vagabond, or rambling Life;

Scalig. *in Chro. pag.* 222.

Aur. Vict. *Excitamagna Agreſtium & Latronum quos* Bagaudas *Incolæ Vocant.*

In Bagauda *id temporis mora delatur.*

Life, and that Mr. *Bochart* derived it from the *Hebrew Bagad*, which ſignifies, ſaith he, *to revolt*, בָּגַד though it is properly uſed for Perfidious. He relates beſides one of the Memoirs, which Mr. *Dupuy* communicated to him upon the Names which divers Nations and People have given to the Gangs of Robbers, or High-way-men, where the *Bagauds* ſeem to *Anſwer* to the *Uſcoks* of *Dalmatia*, the *Coſaks* of *Poland*, the *Heydukes* of *Hungary*, the *Arabs* of *Africa*, and the *Pyrenean Mikelets*. So that it makes doubtleſs very much to the honour of the Ancient *Gallican Church* to maintain, that thoſe *Bagauds* profeſſed the *Chriſtian* Religion. Thus we ſee what poor ſhifts they are forc'd to make uſe of in defending the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion*, when they find themſelves oblig'd to aſſert that the beſt and moſt Ancient Chriſtians were *Banditi*, Rebels, and Rapperies. And beſides let the ſay what they will, they ſhall never perſwade us that in the *Church* of the Third Century, there were ſufficient numbers of theſe goodly *Chriſtians* to make up an Army. So that upon the whole it ſeems much better to reject as we do, the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion* as a groundleſs *Romance*, then to caſt ſuch a ſcandal upon the primitive and golden Ages of the *Church*? But had *Mazeray* and the other Writers read with attention the fifth Book of *Salvian*, in which he deplores the ſad misfortune and miſeries of *Gaule*, they would never have imagin'd, that the *Bagauds* had been *Chriſtians*. The *Chriſtians* being there very numerous in his time and involved

ved in publick calamities, *Salvian* repreſents them as Perſons of a Spirit and Principles quite different from thoſe which *Mezeray* attributes to the *Bagauds*. *What place is there* (ſaith he) *where the Magiſtrates and Governours of Towns do not devour the entrails of the* Widows *and* Orphans, *nay and even of the Saints too, with whom they deal in like manner, becauſe either the love they have for their Religion hinders them from making any reſiſtance, or their innocence and humility does not leave them the power to do it.*

This was the true Spirit of the Ancient *Gallican* Church, and we ought rather to follow *Salvian*, who lived nearer to thoſe firſt times of Chriſtianity, then *Mazeray* and the Legend-Writers, who ſay that the Chriſtians in *Gaule* roſe up in Arms, and that *Maximian* cauſed the *Theb.* Legion to be put to the ſword, for fear they ſhould joyn with and ſtrengthen that Party. Nevertheleſs it is Univerſally believed as a certain Truth, not only at *Turin*, but throughout all *Italy*. All the Modern Writers ſpeak of it after the ſame manner; and all the Preachers on the *Feſtival* of the *Theb.* Soulders do from their Pulpits deliver it ſo to the People. After the very ſame manner *Emmanuel Teſauro*, famous for ſeveral of his other Works, and eſpecially his Hiſtory of the Kings of *Lombardy*, relates the matter in the account he gives of the Martyrdom of the *Theb.* Legion in his Hiſtory of the City of *Turin* Printed in *Folio*; where he

ſaith

ſaith that at the Place where St. *Mauritius's* Town now ſtands, there was an Altar upon which the Emperour *Maximian commanded all the Souldiers of his Army to ſacrifice to Jupiter, and ſwear hoſtility againſt the Chriſtians.* But *Mezeray*, *Teſauro*, and all the others have been led into this miſtake by the Acts of the Martyrs of *Agaunum*. For thoſe Acts in *Surius's* Copy and in that of *Chifflet* do attribute the cauſe of their Death to their refuſal to go and perſecute the Chriſtians in *Gaule*. * There it is ſaid, *that they, together with the reſt of the Army, were Commanded to perſecute the Chriſtians, and that they alone refuſed to Execute that Bloody Order.* And a little after it follows, that the *Emperour* having commanded the whole *Theb.* Legion to be *decimated*, ſent new Orders, *to force all thoſe who were left to promiſe that they would perſecute the Chriſtians.* But this chiefly appears in the Speech the *Theb.* Souldiers are made to ſpeak to *Maximian*, wherein the Author of theſe Acts hath diſplayed all his Wit and Rhetorick. *We offer you*, ſay they, *the beſt Service our hands can perform, againſt all your enemies whatſoever; but we look upon it as the blackeſt of crimes, to imbrue them in innocent blood. Theſe hands know how to fight againſt Wicked men and Rebels to the Empire, but they have never yet learned to deſtroy good Men and loyal Subjects* &c. —— *You command us to go and ſeek for the Chriſtians, that they may be brought to puniſhment, but there is no need for you to make theſe enquiries any further, for here we our ſelves are Chriſtians, and do confeſs God the Father the Author of all things*, Jeſus Chriſt

Em. Teſ. *Hiſt. de Torino lib. 2. pag. 112. Che ogni ſoldato Sacrificaſſe a Giove et giuraſſe la guerra contro a' Chriſtiani.*

* *Paſſio* Mart. Ag. *Cum hi ſicut cæteri militum ad pertrahendam Chriſtianorum multitudinem deſtinarentur*, &c.

his Son, and the Holy Ghoſt. This one particular related in all the Acts of the *Agaunian* Martyrs, to wit, that *Maximian*'s Army was ordered to perſecute the Chriſtians, and to puniſh their Rebellion, ſhews evidently the Martyrdom of the *Theb.* Legion to be but a counterfeit Story. Such a ſtudied and pathetick Speech as this, which they are made to deliver to the *Emperour*, is another proof of the Forgery of their Acts. Theſe little School Declamations would have been very unbecoming the mouths of dying *Chriſtians* and Martyrs, whoſe minds were wholely taken up with the thoughts of another Life. Whenſoever ſuch Speeches as theſe are found in the Acts of Martyrs we may well conclude, that either thoſe Acts are counterfeit, or that thoſe Speeches were added to them by ſome Chriſtians of the following Ages. The true Acts of Martyrs, are thoſe that have been taken out of the publick Regiſters, Church-Offices, and Proconſular Acts. Now after the Stentence of Death pronounced againſt the Chriſtians, it was not uſual amongſt the *Romans* to inſert or add to them any thing more in the publick Regiſters. The Opinion of *Mezeray* upon this matter is ſo juſt and ſo rational, That it is well worth reciting. *In all the Authentick Acts of Martyrs* (ſaith he) *you will find an ardent Charity for God and their Brethren, a modeſty and humility ſo much the greater by how much they were more conſtant and worthy of Glory, an entire confidence in the Grace of God, an extream diffidence of their own Weakneſs, much Meekneſs and Compaſſion for thoſe who were fallen, great Wiſdom and Strength*

Mezer. Etat de la Religion dans les *Gaules* liv. 4. pag. 486.

Strength, and above all, continual Prayers to God: All which godly diſpoſitions render thoſe other Acts, which make Martyrs utter long Speeches and elaborate Diſcourſes, Invectives and Threatnings, juſtly ſuſpected.

Fourthly, ſince *Mezeray* was induced to believe, that the greateſt part of *Maximian's* Army were *Chriſtians*, only upon the Authority of the Authors of St. *Baboulene's* Life, it will not be amiſs to examine what can be built upon this Writer's Authority; And if we caſt but half an eye upon this Work of his, we ſhall plainly diſcern that the whole from the beginning to the end of it is made up of nothing but fabulous Legends and Fictions. The Manucript is kept at *Paris* in the Library of St. *Germain Des Prez*, and *James Dubreuil*, a *Monk* of that *Abbey*, made an abrigdment of it, and publiſhed it in the Year 1614. Mr. *Du Cheſne* inſerted it ſome Years after in his Hiſtory of *France*; Father *Le-Cointe* takes notice of it alſo in his Annals, and rejecteth it as altogether unworthy of credit; for he obſerveth, that this Writer exactly follows in every thing that Anonymous Impoſtor, who wrote the Acts of the Kings of *France*; of which he gives theſe following particulars. *Firſt*, That he makes *Erchenald* Major of the Palace in the firſt Year of *Clovis*, whereas *Fredegair* calls him, who was then in that Office *Æganes*. *Secondly*, that he confounds *Aubert*, Biſhop of *Paris* under King *Clovis*, with *Agilbert*, who was Biſhop of that See under *Clotary*, Son to *Clovis*. *Thirdly*, that of two *Baboulenes*, one of whom was *Abbas Bobienſis*, and the other

Le-Cointe *An. Fr. tom. 3. p. 73. Anonymum Fabulatorem qui geſta Regum Francorum ſcripſit.*

Abbas Foſatenſis, he makes but one. *Fourthly*, That he reckons but 85. Years from the Death of *Clovis* the firſt to the Death of *Clovis* the ſecond; *Fifthly*, That he makes *Clovis* the ſecond to ſucceed his Father *Dagobert* in the Year of our Lord 643, in the firſt *Indiction*. And ſeveral other faults he finds in the ſame Author all contrary to the known truth of Hiſtory. But a moſt notable one is his Saying, that the *Abbey of St. Maur des Foſſez* is ſituate in the place where formerly the *Camp* of the *Bagauds* was, and that they incamped there becauſe there was then ſtanding an old *Caſtle*, built by *Julius Cæſar*, incloſed with Walls, and ſecured on all ſides with large *Ditches*. The truth is, that that *Abbey* of St. *Maur* is call'd by ſeveral Writers of the Later Ages *Caſtrum Bagaudarum*. Mr. *Menage* in his Origines upon the Word *Bagauds* ſaith, that in a *Charter* of the *Abbey* of St. *Maur*, granted in the Year 868. *St. Maur des Foſſez* is call'd *Caſtrum Bagaudarum*, and adds *becauſe Anciently it was a Fort of the Bagauds*. But who told that *Anonymus* Author, that *Julius Cæſar* had built there a noble *Caſtle*, *Nobiliter Conſtructum*. He is the only Writer who ſpeaks of that *Caſtle*, there is not the leaſt mention of it in the Commentaries of *Julius Cæſar*, though all his Actions in *Gaule* are therein Written with the greateſt exactneſs. Moreover, this Impoſtor makes *Oroſius* to ſay things, which he never thought of. For *Oroſius* ſaith, *that* Amandus *and* Ælianus *having got a conſiderable number of Peaſants together, raiſed great diſturbances in* Gaule, *which Oblig'd* Diocleſian *to create* Maximianus Herculeus, Cæſar, *and to ſend him thither,*

Oroſ. *lib.* 9 *cap.* 25.

who

who being a Man of conſiderable experience in War, eaſily diſperſed that Army of Peaſants which was altogether without Order and Diſcipline. But this Anonymous Scribler makes *Oroſius* to ſay, That *Amandus* and *Ælianus* were Chriſtians, and that they revolted only, becauſe they thought that their Religion did not allow them to obey *Pagan* Princes. It is a ſtrange impudence this, firſt to invent Fables, and then for the confirmation of them, to quote a Famous Hiſtorian. If we take this Authors quotation out of him for truth, *Oroſius* attributes very Noble and Evangelical Morals to the Chriſtians of the Third Century, in making them ſhake off the Authority of their lawful ſuperiours, only becauſe they were not of their own Religion. Monſieur *de Tirlemont* makes a Remark very ſuitable to the purpoſe. It is upon the Acts of St. *Maximus*, related by *Baronius* in the year 254. *There ariſes*, ſaith he, *yet greater difficulties from what* Optimus *ſaith, That the Edict of* Decius, *commanded all Chriſtians to forſake their Superſtition, and to acknowledge their lawful Prince, on whom all things depended, and to Worſhip his Gods.* Againſt which Mr. *Tirlemont* with great reaſon does except thus. *What does all this mean? Should then the Chriſtians have made any difficulty to acknowledg* Decius *for their Emperour? By no means. But the truth is, that though they were the moſt Submiſſive and Trueſt Subjects to their Princes, Nevertheleſs, becauſe they did not prefer them to God himſelf, they were deemed to fall from the duty of their Allegiance.* In fine, this Anonymous Writer of *Mezeray*'s relates the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion* very differently, both

Tirlemont 2. *p. tom.* 3. *pag.* 868.

from the counterfeit St. *Eucherius*, *Surius*, and Father *Chifflet*. For he ſaith, that *Maximian* having ordered, that all the Souldiers of his Army ſhould ſwear upon the Altars of his Gods, Sacrifice to them, and oblige themſelves by an Oath, that they would perſecute the Chriſtians where-ever they ſhould meet with any of them: *Mauritius* anſwered for the whole *Theb. Legion* under his Command. *We know, O Emperour, how to fight againſt Rebels and Wicked Perſons; but we know not how to make War upon Good Men, and our own Fellow Subjects: Though we are all well Arm'd, yet we do'nt make any reſiſtance, as being more willing to have our own blood ſhed, than to ſhed that of others. So without any more ado they ſtretched out their necks to the Executioners, and were raiſed by their Torments to the glory of Paradiſe.* And thus this Anonymous Author leads us immediatly to the end of his Romance, whereas the ſuppoſed St. *Eucherius*, after *Maximian* hath given his barbarous Orders, makes the *Theb. Legion* to withdraw; ſuppoſes, that it refuſes to march; ſaith, that it was only decimated at firſt; makes the Emperour to reiterate his Orders, relates their Speech to this Prince; and ſo entertaining his Reader with a great number of intervening particulars, he at laſt brings him to the Cataſtrophe of his Tragedy. Whence it follows, that the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion* is not originally found but in falſe and ſuppoſititious Writings, and was only related at firſt by Impoſtours. One invented and publiſh'd the Story of this Martyrdom, Another vouch'd for the Truth of that Narrative, by another of his own: And upon the credit of theſe

theſe two Relators, hundreds of others believed it, and at laſt it became a common Opinion in the World. For a Tale never miſſes to be credited, when it begins to grow ancient; and we ſee every day, that when any Relation hath paſſed for current for fifty or threeſcore years, it is then almoſt too late to Contradict, or call it in Queſtion.

CHAP. XVII.

That it is not True, That ſome Cohorts *of the* Theb. Legion *were detached out of* Maximian's *Army to March againſt* Carauſius.

TOWARDS the end of the counterfeit *Agaunian* Acts there is a paſſage which affords us another proof, that this Story of the *Theb. Legion* is a Forgery. It was, ſaith the Author, a common report, That *Urſus* and *Victor*, two Souldiers of that *Legion*, ſuffered death for *Chriſt* at *Soleurre*.

Ex eadem Legione fuiſſe dicuntur etiam illi Martyres, Urſus & Victor *quos ſoloduro paſſos fama confirmat*, &c.

If we ask the *Legend* Writers, how it came to paſs, that theſe two *Theb.* Souldiers left their *Legion*, and were martyred ſo far off in *Suiſſerland*, they anſwer, that *Maximian* upon his March into *Gaule*, to compoſe the *Bagaudian* troubles, was inform'd that *Carauſius* had revolted, and ſeized on

both the Port of *Bologne* and the Navy which the *Romans* kept there. Which news oblig'd him to make a great detachment of his Army, and to ſend it in haſte down the *Rhine* againſt this Rebel. They add, that there were amongſt this detachment ſome *Cohorts* of the *Theb Legion*, all the Souldiers whereof were maſſacred upon the roads, upon the news of what had happened at *Agaunum* to the body of the *Legion*; ſo that *Urſus* and *Victor* were put to death at *Soleurre*: Three Hundred and Eighteen were thrown into a Well at *Colen*, and the reſt in ſeveral places ſuffered Martyrdom. If you ask them further, who told them all theſe Tranſactions and Particulars, they cite you one *Helinaud* a Monk of the *Ciſtertian* Order, and Author of the Acts of *Florentius*, *Caſſius*, *Victor*, *Gerion* and ſeveral other Souldiers of the *Theb. Legion*. Theſe Acts are found in *Surius* on the 10th of *October*, where he puts the death of theſe pretended Saints; and it is ſtrange, that Cardinal *Baronius* ſhould not ſcruple to follow theſe Acts, and to make uſe of them, when they are full of ſuch viſible and Palpable Untruths; unleſs he did it for the reaſon we have formerly given, *viz.* That in examining the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion* ſo many Apocryphal Authors and ſuppoſititious Writings do occur by the way, that it is very troubleſom to get rid of them. Which thing however, far from being favourable to that Martyrdom, ought the rather to render it more ſuſpicious, ſeeing that nothing can be produced in its defence but ſpurious and counterfeited Acts.

Sur. *tom.* 5. 10. *Octo.*

Bar. *tom.* 2. *an. ch.* 297. *num.* 18.

Acts. But let us hear what *Helinaud* himſelf ſaith, he tells us ; *That the Emperour* Maximian *marching againſt the* Bagauds *had notice given him, that* Carauſius *was forming ſome enterpriſe againſt the* Empire ; *That this* Carauſius *was a Man of quality, and made by the* Romans *Governour of a Province near the Ocean and upon thoſe Confines of* Gaule *and* Saxony, *which the* Franks, *driven a ſecond time out of their own Country, were come to inhabit. That the* Emperour *upon this News gave Orders that part of his Army ſhould go down the* Rhine ; *amongſt which were ſome Cohorts of* Chriſtian *Souldiers commanded by* Gerion, Victor, Caſſius *and* Florentius. Then he relates the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion, upon their refuſing to adore an Idol, that* Maximian *ſet up at a place called afterwards St.* Maurice, *and to which he Order'd all his Army to do Sacrifice.* Then he ſaith, *that the* Emperours Life-Guards *followed the Detachment ſent againſt* Carauſius, *and that having underſtood, that* Caſſius *and* Florentius *with ſeven others were of the* Theb. Legion, *they cut off their heads near* Verona *on the* Rhine ; *That* Gerion *marching before with three hundred and eighteen* Theb. *Souldiers, the Imperial Miniſters came up to them before they had heard any thing of this maſſacre of their Fellow Soldiers ; That all of them received with conſtancy the Crown of Martyrdom in a Field near* Colen, *and that the Executioners having cut their Bodies to pieces threw them into a deep Well.* Then headds, *That the other* Cohort *commanded by* Victor *was marching in great haſte to their Rendevouz, and was come to the Town of the* Gauls, *call'd by the Inhabitants* Troy, *or* Xanthus, *in remembe-*

rance

brance of the Old Troja, *from whence their Anceſtors came. But that while they were encamping in the pleaſant Meadows, near that place, the Commiſſioners of the Emperor arrived, who having maſſacred* Victor, *that Illuſtrious Soldier of Jeſus Chriſt, with three hundred and thirty other Theb. Souldiers, ſunk their dead Bodies into marſhy Grounds and Ditches.*

Mezeray has alſo ſuffer'd himſelf to be impoſed upon by this account of *Helinaud*, as well as by that other of the Anonymous Author of St. *Baboulene's* Life. Since therefore he has collected the materials of his Hiſtory of *France*, before the times of *Clovis*, out of ſuch uncertain and adulterate writings, this may ſerve as a caution to his Readers not to believe every thing he ſaith. *This* Helinaud, ſaith he, *wrote about the year* 1212, *but he muſt have taken this Narrative from other Authors more ancient than himſelf. But for thoſe which he makes uſe of, we know nothing of them, I wiſh they had told us where that new* Troy *was, which was then inhabited by the* Gauls. *Some are of Opinion that he meant by it, the* Trajan Colony, *and that through Ignorance and Affectation they imagined it to have been a* Trojan Colony. *But if there ever really was a City in that Countrey call'd* Troy, *we muſt believe, that it was built by the* Gauls, *and that they were ever afterwards perſuaded of their* Trojan *Original; being either flattered into that Opinion by the* Romans, *the better to tame them by a pretended affinity; or elſe attributing to themſelves that Honor, as not willing to yeild in point of Antiquity to thoſe to whom they were not inferior in Valour.* But the following Remarks will ſuffice to ſhew what little cer-

Mezeray *Hiſt. of* France *before* Clovis *Lib.* 2. *pag.* 228.

certainty there is both in the Text of *Helinaud* and in *Mezeray*'s Commentary. Helin.

First, This *Ciſtercian* Monk makes *Carauſius* to have been a Man of quality, whereas *Eutropius*, who in all likelyhood was better informed than *Helinaud*, about the birth of *Carauſius*, ſaith expreſly, that he was a Man ſprung from the very dregs of the People. Which account of him is confirmed by *Oroſius*, who calls him alſo a Man of the meaneſt extraction. Carauſius *quidem Nobilis* Eu. Carauſius *qui vilissimo natus*, Oroſ. Carauſius *quidem genere infimus.*

Secondly, *Helinaud* ſaith, That *Caſſius* and *Florentius*, with ſeven other *Theb.* Souldiers ſuffered at *Verona* on the River *Rhine*. This *Surius* alſo relates upon the Credit of thoſe Acts; and *Baronius* hath inſerted them in his Annals. 'Tis true, that this Cardinal being afterwards ſenſible of this groſs blunder, hath corrected it in his Notes on the *Roman* Martyrology, where he ſaith, that inſtead of *Verona*, we ought to read *Bon*, which is a Town of *Germany* ſituate on the *Rhine* near *Colen*. But does he eſtabliſh this his correction by the authority of any more authentick Manuſcript? Does he ſay, that he hath taken it out of a more exact Copy? Not at all. He only ſaith, that it is his Conjecture, becauſe he hath been told that it is at *Bon*, where the Reliques of theſe two *Theb.* Souldiers are kept. So that if he had been told, that their Reliques were at *Baſil*, *Worms*, or *Spire*, he would in all likelyhood have made no difficulty in ſetting down any of theſe inſtead of *Verona*. And for the ſame reaſon another may conjecture, that it was at *Verona* in *Italy*, becauſe in that Town of Baron. *Martyr. Rom. pag.* 402. *ad* 10. *Oct. Sed* Verona *perperam legitur loco* Bonæ. Baron. *ubi horum ſanctorum Corpora requieſcere accepimus.*

of the *Milaneſe*, they think they have the Reliques of *Caſſius*, as *Garnier* a Canon relates it in his Hiſtory of St. *Alexander*.

Eutro. *Cum apud* Bononiam *pertractum Belgicæ & Armoricæ pacandum mare accepiſſet, quod* Franci & Saxones *infeſtabant.*

Helin. *Procurator conſtitutus erat Provinciæ quæ eſt juxta Oceanum, ubi* Franci *jam ſecundo a ſedibus expulſi juxta* Gallorum & Saxonum *confinia conſederunt.*

Thirdly, *Eutropius* ſaith, that *Carauſius* was by the *Romans* commiſſionated at *Bologne*, to free thoſe Seas from the *Piracies* of the *Franks* and *Saxons*.

And *Helinaud* makes *Carauſius* Procurator for the *Romans*, in a Province bordering upon the *Franks*, contrary to the Geography of thoſe times, which places the *Franks* in *Germany* and very far from the *Belgick* Frontiers.

Beſides, if *Eutropius* repreſents the *Belgicks*, infeſted by the *Franks*, he obſerves at the ſame time, that they were Pirates who kept the Seas, and conſequently whoſe places of abode might have been at a great diſtance. But if any body will undertake to defend *Helinaud's* Relation, he will do us a kindneſs to mark us out the Province, where, he ſaith, that the *Franks*, when driven a ſecond time out of their own Country, came to ſettle near the Confines of the *Gauls* and *Saxons*, and whereby it is ſuppoſed, that the *Gauls* and *Saxons* were Neighbours. This particular we ſhall examine no further, but leave it to the conſideration of thoſe that are better verſed in ancient Geography.

But *Fourthly*, what does *Helinaud* mean by that Town of the *Franks*, to which the Inhabitants gave the Name of *Troy*, or *Xanthus*, in remembrance of

of the Ancient *Troy*, from whence their Anceſtors came? Unleſs one ſhould imagin it to have been the ſame with *Troy* in *Champaine*, as ſome ignorant Writers have done; who were led into that miſtake by that *French* Name: For anciently that Town was not call'd *Troja*, but *Trecæ*, as appears by *Ammianus Marcellinus*. But *Mezeray* is not to be excuſed, when he pretends to find any tolerable Senſe in this Diſcourſe of *Helinaud*; eſpecially, when he himſelf diſcover'd ſo great a blunder in it; and which made him in his Tranſlation of this place of *Helinaud*, at large, to leave out the Word *Xanthus*, which is the Name of the River, that ran near the Walls of *Troy*, and which the *Franks*, as *Helinaud* ſaith, gave to their Town in remembrance of the Ancient *Troy*. *Mezeray*, who in his Hiſtory of *France* before *Clovis*, does affect to appear well verſed in the old *Gallick* Geography, would have been hard put to it to have produced any good Geographer or exact Hiſtorian, that makes any mention of that *Troy*, built by the *Franks*, after they were driven the ſecond time out of their own Country. This is exactly the Fable, that was revived by the Abbot *Trithemius*, and is by all the Learned rejected as a Dream, though he would fain have perſwaded the World, that he collected it out of the two Famous Authors *Vaſtaldus* and *Humibaldus*, whom he makes to ſay, That after the deſtruction of *Troy*, ſome *Trojans*, under the conduct of *Francion*, fixed their abode near the *Palus Mæotis*, from whence being expelled by the neighbouring Nations, they retired into

into *Hungary*, where they built the Town, *Sicambria*, which they forſook afterwards to make an Irruption into *Germany*, where they conquered the Country of the old *Sicambrians*, which they poſſeſſed till the year 420, when following the Example of the *Vandals*, *Viſigoths* and *Burgundians* they ſpread firſt into *Gaule*, and came to ſettle into *Gueldria*; but that after having got ſeveral Victories and driven the *Burgundians* and *Viſigoths* from their Conqueſts, they made themſelves Maſters of the greateſt part of *Gaule*. All which agrees with the Romance which the *Ciſtercian* Monk hath given us, and wherewith he hath alſo ſet off another Romance, to wit, the Martyrdom of *Gerion* and ſome other *Theb* Soldiers. Now ſhall we after all this depend upon Cardinal *Baronius*, who cites *Helinaud* with ſuch high Commendations, calling him a Famous Writer, who took every thing he wrote out of very Ancient Monuments, and drew them up into a Compendious Hiſtory?

Baron. *tom.* 2. *an.* 297. *n.* 18.

Celebris Temporum ſuorum Scriptor, qui eadem omnia ex Antiquioribus Monumentis accepta brevi Sermone contexuit.

Fifthly, We have formerly obſerved, that it is very ordinary for Impoſtours to thwart and contradict one another; and we muſt here again make the ſame Remark, becauſe in the *Agaunian* Tragedy, we ſee none but Liars and Cheats appear upon the Stage. The counterfeit St. *Eucherius* ſaith not one Word there of thoſe *Cohorts* of the *Theb. Legion*, detached from *Maximians* Army, and ſent down the *Rhine* to joyn the Body which was aſſembling againſt *Carauſius*.

But

But according to his Acts, the whole *Theb. Legion* was at *Agaunum*, and ſuffered there. For he ſaith, that *Maximian* by one ſentence condemned all the *Theb.* Souldiers, and the more effectually to put his ſentence in execution, he cauſed them to be ſurrounded by ſeveral Bodies of his other * Souldiers, and thus, ſaith he, that truly Angelical Legion was ſlain. But if we believe *Helinaud*, the whole Legion was not at *Agaunum*; for a great Detachment had been made out of it againſt *Carauſius*, and *Gerion* was Martyr'd near *Colen* with three hundred and eighteen Souldiers, while *Victor* had in another place the ſame deſtiny, with the three hundred & thirty, who accompany'd him. Add to theſe, the nine who ſuffered Martyrdom near *Bonne*, and you ſhall find, that after *Helinaud's*, own reckoning ſix hundred fifty nine ſuffered in other places then at *Agaunum*, where the ſuppoſititious St. *Eucherius* affirms the whole Legion to have been barbarouſly ſlain.

Und Sententiâ interfici omnes decrevit, &c.

* *Sic interfecta eſt illa plane Angelica Legio.*

But *Sixthly*, becauſe theſe two Cities, *Colen*, and *Bonne*, deſirous to maintain the reputation of their Martyrs, and the worſhip which is paid to them, may reply, that St. *Eucherius* in his Relation hath followed the ordinary uſe of giving the name of the whole to the moſt conſiderable part of it, and therefore that what he ſaith does not deſtroy the account given by *Helinaud*, *Viz.* That *Maximian*, upon his march into *Gaule* to ſuppreſs the *Bagaudian* Inſurection, underſtood, that *Carauſius* had revolted and threatned the Confines of the Empire; which was the reaſon why he

he divided his Army and ſent part of it with all ſpeed againſt this Rebel: We object, that this Anſwer, and the account of *Helinaud* ſuppoſe, that the Revolts of the *Bagauds* and of *Carauſius* happened both at one and the ſame time, which ſuppoſitions cannot be proved. For *Eutropius* and *Oroſius*, who without doubt were better informed than *Helinaud* concerning theſe two Events, do exactly diſtinguiſh them; both of them ſaying, that *Carauſius* did not begin to move till after the *Bagaudian* Inſurrection was over And *Eutropius* having ſpoken of *Amandus* and *Ælianus*, and of the diſorders cauſed by the *Bagauds*, adds, that after that time, *Carauſius* a Man of a very low and vile Extraction, &c. took the Purple and poſſeſſed himſelf of *Britain*.

Eutrop. *lib.* 3.

Poſt hæc tempora etiam Carauſius *qui Viliſſimè natus, Purpuram ſumpſit & Britannias occupavit.*

Oroſius places theſe two Events in the ſame order as *Eutropius*, ſaying, that *Maximian* defeated the *Bagauds*, and eaſily diſperſed their ill diſciplined Army, and that after this Expedition *Carauſius* began to ſtir.

Oroſius, *loco citato, qui facile agreſtium hominum imperitam & confuſam manum militari virtute compeſcuit.*

Deinde Carauſius *quidam genere infimus*, &c.

Therefore Father *Pagi* having put the *Bagaudian* Inſurrection in the year of our Lord 285, refers the Revolt of *Carauſius* to the following year; which the Famous *Henry Noris* places yet a whole year later, *viz.* in 287, and though theſe two learned Men do not agree

An. Pagi *an.* 286. *pag.* 116.

Henri Noris *Diſſ.* 1. *de Num. ſmſſ. Dio. & Max.*

agree about the time that *Maximianus Herculeus* was made *Auguſtus*, nevertheleſs they both ſay that the Troubles in *Gaule* were ended, before *Carauſius* formed any Enterpriſe againſt the Empire. This *Aurelius Victor* is peremptory in; and no Man that reads him can doubt of it.

For after he hath ſpoken of the *Bagaudian* War, he adds, *That in the ſame War* Carauſius *a Citizen of* Menapia, *diſtinguiſh'd himſelf with ſo much Gallantry and Valour, that the Eſteem and great Reputation he acquired, and the Opinion they had conceived of his being a good Officer, as having bore Arms from his Youth, were Motives to the* Romans *to make choice of him to fit out their Navy, and to clear the Seas of the* German *Pyrats then ſwarming in thoſe Parts.* From which Words of *Aurelius Victor*, it will appear, that *Carauſius* made War with *Maximian* againſt the *Bagauds*, and ſo ſignaliz'd himſelf by his illuſtrious Actions, as moved the *Romans* to entruſt him with their Naval Forces; and that it was not till afterward, that being informed they ſuſpected him, and had reſolved his Ruin, he declar'd openly againſt the Empire, put on the Purple, and invaded *Britain*. So that it is certain, that the *Bagaudian* Revolt was not at the ſame time with that of *Carauſius*. Now ſince this *Carauſius* was perſonally in conjunction with the Imperial Troops, employed in the War againſt the *Bagauds*, it makes it evident, that the Monk *Helinaud* was groſsly

Aurelius Victor.

Quo bello Carauſius Menapiæ *Civis, factis* promptioribus *enituit eoque eum ſimul quia gubernandi (quo officio adoleſcentium ineunte exercueret) gnarus habebatur parandæ Claſſi, & propulſandis Germanis mariâ infeſtantibus præfecere.*

miſtaken, in going about to perſwade us, that *Maximian* in his march againſt the *Bagauds*, detached ſome *Cohorts* of the *Thebean* Legion againſt *Carauſius*, who at that time threatned to invade the Frontiers of the Empire.

CHAP. XVIII.

That no Writer for two Hundred Years after Maximian *hath made any mention of the Martyrdom of the* Theb. *Legion.*

Martyr. Rom. Baron. dec. Kal. Oct. pag. 375.

CArdinal *Baronius* in his Notes on the *Roman* Martyrology, obſerves that the *Greek* Church hath amongſt its Martyrs, one *Mauritius* and his Companions, who at the time of *Diocleſian* and *Maximian*'s Perſecution, ſuffered Death at *Apamea*, a City of *Syria*. He further ſaith, that he was the ſame *Mauritius* who was chief of the *Thebean* Legion; that the Martyrs of *Apamea* were the *Agaunian* Martyrs, and that formerly he himſelf was of that Opinion, condemning *Metaphraſtes* for having confounded the Eaſtern with the Weſtern Martyrs. And adds, that he was perſwaded to the contrary by reading a Place of *Theodoretus*, Biſhop of *Cyr*, where he ſpeaks of the moſt eminent Martyrs that were come to his Knowledge. It would here be ſuperfluous either to examine this Paſſage of

Theodoret. *de Evang. verſ. lib.* 8.

Theodoret,

Theodoret, or the Reaſons which induced *Baronius* to change his Opinion. It is enough that by this Learned Cardinal's own Confeſſion, we know that there was a time when he thought that *Mauritius* and his Companions were martyred at *Apamea*; which is as much as to ſay, that he look'd upon *Eucherius*'s Relation to be Fabulous; and that the *Latin* Writers deſigning to do Service to the Weſtern Churches, had remov'd the Scene of this Tragedy from *Syria* into the *Alps*. We cannot pretend to know certainly the motives which *Baronius* had then to call in queſtion the Martyrdom of the *Theban* Legion. Nevertheleſs, there is ſome reaſon to believe, that one of thoſe which made the ſtrongeſt impreſſion upon him, was the univerſal ſilence of the Eccleſiaſtical Writers for above Two Hundred Years after the time in which it is ſuppos'd that this Legion was cut to pieces at *Agaunum*. For indeed the Martyrdom of a whole Legion is ſo conſiderable an Event, that had ſuch a thing ever been, it muſt needs have been taken notice of, in above a Hundred Places of Church Hiſtory. And can any pertinent Reaſon of this general Silence be aſſigned? Thoſe who believe that a Woman poſſeſſed the *Roman* See, between the time of *Leo* the IV, and *Bennet* the III, have ſomething to anſwer to thoſe, who, as an Argument againſt it, preſs the Churches ſilence for above Two Hundred Years, *viz.* to the time of *Marianus Scotus*, who was one of the firſt who ſpoke of Pope *Joan*. To which they reply, that thoſe were very ignorant and

barbarous Ages, wherein Writers were very ſcarce; and that though ſome few of them may be found, yet the matters they handled had no relation to the ſucceſſion of Popes: That perhaps thoſe who treated of it were by the care and induſtry of the Church of *Rome* wholly ſuppreſſed, or elſe have periſhed by the ſame misfortune, that hath raviſhed from us ſo many other Works; That *Hincmarus*, *Photius* and the Defenders of the cauſe of the Emperours, againſt the Uſurpations of the Popes *Hildebrand* and *Nicholas*, have always ſpared the Chair of St. *Peter* and the ſucceſſours of the Apoſtles. What other reaſons they give for this ſilence, may be ſeen in that excellent Treatiſe concerning Pope *Joan*, lately publiſh'd by Mr. *Spanheim*. But now there is no ſubſtantial reaſon, can be given for the ſilence of the Eccleſiaſtical Writers concerning the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion*, till about the time of *Gregory* of *Tours*, viz. almoſt three hundred Years after *Maximian's* Expedition into *Gaule*. For had there been any ground for the belief of the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion*, two ſort of Writers would have undoubtedly ſpoken of it. *Viz.* Either thoſe Preachers who have made Homilies, or Sermons upon the Martyrs, or elſe the Compilers of Chronologies, and Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorys. We have ſtill a great number remaining of the Sermons of thoſe Fathers, who lived two hundred years after *Maximian's* Empire, and which are either upon all Martyrs in general, or ſome Martyrs in particular. 'Tis true indeed we have loſt *Methodius's* Diſcourſe upon the

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Martyrs, except only a fragment of it tranſmitted to us by *Theodoret*, the *Panegyrick* of Martyrs, by *Phileas* an *Egyptian* Biſhop, mentioned by St. *Jerom*, in his Book of Church-writers, the Treatiſe of the Perſecution of Chriſtians, by *James* ſurnamed the Wiſe, whereof *Gennadius* ſpeaks with great Commendation, a Letter of St. *Jerom* upon the ſufferings of Martyrs addreſſed to *Chromatius* and *Heliodorus*, as we are told by *Caſſiodorus*, a Treatiſe of *Vigilius* in praiſe of Martyrs, and a Letter of the Acts of Martyrs amongſt the *Barbarians* cited by *Gennadius*. And though theſe and ſeveral like writings are now loſt, yet if the Authors of them had ſpoke of the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion*, doubtleſs ſome footſteps of it would be ſeen in the remaining Writers of thoſe times, who had occaſion to make uſe of their Works. *Methodius* wrote about the year 290, *Phileas* Biſhop of *Thmuis* in *Egypt* was beheaded in the year 311, under the Perſecution of *Maximian*, and had they ſpoken of the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion*, *Lactantius* who flouriſh'd at the beginning of the fourth Century, muſt in all probability have known ſomething of it. But beſides *Lactantius*, being an *Italian* born, and call'd into *Gaule* by *Conſtantine* for the Education of his Son *Criſpus*, it is very unlikely that he ſhould have been wholly unacquainted with ſo remarkable an Event, as that of the *Agaunian* Martyrdom, which might have happened but thirty years before: And had he known any thing thereof, it would have fall'n in ſo pat to his Treatiſe *of the death of the Perſecutors*, That

Theodoret. *Dial.* 1. *p.* 37. Hieron. *de Script. Ec. c.* 33. Genand. *de Script. Eccleſ. cap.* 1. Caſſiod. *Lect. Div. cap.* 32. Gennad. *cap.* 37.

it cannot be imagin'd he would have left it out, ſpecially when he was deſcribing the Cruelties of the Emperor *Maximian*, and the dreadful Puniſhments which God inflicted upon him. Whoſoever therefore ſhall weigh with an unprejudiced Mind this ſilence of *Lactantius*, will doubtleſs be perſwaded, that the Martydom of the *Thebean Legion* is nothing but a Fiction.

Though the Sufferings of Confeſſors in general do afford a rich Field of Eloquence to Preachers, yet it muſt be granted, that there is no Martyrdom more capable of receiving Ornament from the Pulpit, and of elevating the genius and thoughts of a Chriſtian Orator, than the Martyrdom of this Legion. How comes it then to paſs, that of ſo many Fathers, who have writ Homilies in the praiſe of Martyrs, none of them have ever made uſe of ſo pathetick and powerful an Example as this would have been. *Ephrem*, a Monk of *Syria*, wrote *Encomiums* on all the Martyrs of Chriſt, about the Year 360. *Gregory* of *Nazianzen* hath handled the ſame Subject much about the ſame time. We have the Sermons of St. *Chryſoſtom*, upon Martyrs in general. *Aſterius* Biſhop of *Amaſia* in *Pontus*, who lived at the beginning of the Fifth Age, hath made likewiſe a Panegyrick on all Martyrs, but none of theſe Fathers, nor any other who treated of the ſame Matter, have made the leaſt mention of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean* Legion.

If any had mentioned it, it muſt have been *Maximus*, Biſhop of *Turin*, who died under the Reign of *Honorius*, and *Theodoſius*, Junior: For he wrote

wrote in the Country, where it is ſuppoſed that this Martyrdom happened, and the Memory of it would therefore have been freſh in his Days; but in all his Works there is not one Word relating to it. We read, amongſt his Writings that are yet extant, a Sermon, *De Sanctis Martyribus*, which *Gennadius* hath taken notice of, and call'd, *Generalem omnium Sanctorum Homiliam*. But in this Sermon, there is not the leaſt ſtroak in reference to the *Thebean* Legion. 'Tis true, that amongſt his Works, there is another Sermon with this Title, *In Natali Sanctorum Taurinorum* Octavii, Aventitii & Solutoris. Theſe are the ſame Saints, whoſe Names are ſeen in Capital Letters, on the Frontiſpiece of the Jeſuites Church at *Turin*. In which Church, there is a Chappel where the Reliques of theſe Saints are kept in an Urn, which Madam *Chreſtiene* of *France* cauſed to be made on purpoſe, with this Inſcription ingraved on it, *Auguſtæ Taurinorum Patronis Chriſtiana à Francia*. Theſe Saints have done many Miracles, if we may believe the Vows and Offerings hung up in their Chappel; but we may obſerve, that this Sermon which we ſpeak of, is to be found amongſt thoſe of St. *Ambroſe*, of the impreſſion of *Baſil*, in the Year 1555, with this Note in the Margent, *A Sermon of St.* Maximus. The *Benedictines* of *Paris* in their new Edition of St. *Ambroſe*, do likewiſe reſtore it to that Biſhop of *Turin*, and ſay, that St. *Maximus* had been ſo converſant in the Works of St. *Ambroſe*, that he ſometimes uttered long Paſſages out of them in his own Sermons; the doing whereof, occaſioned

great Confuſion in the Homilies of theſe Two Fathers; and they likewiſe judge St. *Maximus* to have been the Author of the Book of Sacraments attributed to St. *Ambroſe*. However, *Gennadius* does not mention that Sermon in his Catalogue of *Maximus*'s Works. And Father *Mabillon* publiſhing ſome new Pieces of this Father, in his *Muſeum Italicum*, ſays, that we ought to conſult *Gennadius*, to diſtinguiſh the genuine Works of this Father, from thoſe which are ſpurious. I ſhould be very ſorry, that this Sermon ſhould be diſowned to belong to *Maximus*, for it is ſo principal a ſupport to the Cauſe we defend, that if there was any ground for what we are told of the *Thebean Legion*, this is the very work where we ſhould find it. But if we look for it in the Body of that Sermon, we ſhall looſe our labour. I have read it ſeveral times over, but never could find one word in it relating in the leaſt to the Martyrdom in queſtion. Should any pretend to make his beſt of the Inſcription, *In Natali Sanctorum Taurinorum* Octavii, Aventitii & Solutoris; this Title does not import theſe Three Saints to have been *Thebean* Souldiers: For thoſe People whom the ancient Geographers called *Taurini*, were extended far into the *Cottian Alps*, and into *Liguria*; ſo that we ought not therefore to conclude that *Octavius*, *Aventitius* and *Solutor*, were Three Saints particular to the City of *Turin*, becauſe they are called *Sancti Taurinorum*. In St. *Ambroſe*'s Works, printed at *Baſil* in the Year 1555, there is *Sanctorum Tauricorum*. In the Geographical Manuſcript of *Selden*, there is likewiſe *Tavenos*; and

Mabillon *Muſ. Ital. Tom. 1. p. 2. Gennadio duce reſtitui poſſunt.*

and who can tell but *St. Maximus* might mean ſome Saints whoſe Zeal and conſtancy had been remarkable amongſt thoſe People called *Tauriſci*, who are placed by ſome Geographers in the Fifth *Rhetia*. If we had that Manuſcript of *St. Maximus*, mentioned by the *Benedictine Monks*, in their new Edition of St. *Ambroſe*, we might perhaps make ſome other Remarks on the Title of that Sermon: But without examining whether the Titles of St. *Maximus*'s Sermons be ancient, and writ by himſelf, here is a Proof, that *Octavius*, *Aventitius*, and *Solutor*, were not *Thebean* Souldiers, and ſuch a Proof that nothing can be replied againſt it. The Counterfeit St. *Eucherius*, does not mention any of thoſe in his Relation; but ſaith, that in his time none of them were known by Name, except them following, *viz.* *Mauritius*, *Exuperius*, *Candidus*, *Victor*, and another *Victor* who ſuffered Death at *Soleur*, with *Urſus*; adding that the Names of the others were unknown to him, but were written in the Book of Life. As we believe the Author of the Acts of the *Thebean* Souldiers more modern than St. *Maximus*, this ſufficeth to convince us, that the Three Saints whoſe Piety this *Biſhop of Turin* did formerly celebrate, were not *Thebean* Souldiers. But to prevent all cavilling about the time in which St. *Eucherius* might have written, we ſhall produce other Writers, who lived ſome Ages after St. *Maximus*. *Ado*, died about the Year of our Lord, 875. This *Ado* who was Arch-biſhop of *Vienna*, hath collected all the Names of the *Thebean* Souldiers that were

heard

Ado Martyr. 7. Kal. 7. bris.

heard of in his Time, thirteen whereof he reckons in his Martyrology, to wit, *Mauritius, Exuperius, Candidus, Molossus, Victor, Innocentius, Vetalis Gerion, Victor, Orsus, Alexander, Secundus* and *Antoninus*. Amongst which we find not either *Octavius, Aventitius*, or *Solutor*. Now *Vienna* being but fifty Leagues distant from *Turin*, had these Saints, whose Memory was celebrated in *Piedmont*, been generally thought to have been *Theb.* Souldiers, there is no Likelihood, that *Ado* would have left them out of his Catalogue. This reason is yet more confirmed by *Usuard*'s silence upon it, who was a *Monk* of St. *Germains*, and contemporary with *Ado* He formed the design of making a *Martyrology* both more exact and copious than any that had appear'd before: For he thought, that St. *Jerom* and *Beda* had handled this matter too carelesly; and it is even reported, That the Emperor *Charles* the *Bald*, to whom he dedicated his Book, had set him at work. And therefore it is more likely, that he did every thing answerable to the Zeal of his Age for Martyrs and Reliques. Which notwithstanding, his diligence and all the care he took, could effect no more than the Discovery which he made of two other *Theb. Souldiers*, namely *Cassius* and *Florentius*, who are also recorded by *Helinand*. But further, had it passed for current, at that time, that the three Saints in St. *Maximus*'s Sermon were *Theb. Souldiers*, 'tis very improbable, that they could have escaped the diligent Search of *Usuard*. If after this, any one should alledge to us the Lives of Saints, as the Legends of *Octavius, Aventitius* and *Solutor*, we have no other Answer

ſwer for them, but that there are none ſo blind, as they that will not ſee. But ſince it hath ſo fallen out, that *Maximus* his Sermon hath given us an occaſion to ſpeak of St. *Ambroſe*, we ought not to paſs by, without ſome Reflection, the Silence of this Father in this particular, *viz.* concerning the *Theb. Legion* and their Martyrdom, though in an hundred places of his Works, he ſpeaks of Saints and famous Martyrs in general. The time he lived was not long after that, wherein it is ſuppoſed, that the *Theb. Legion* was cut off. He was Biſhop at *Milan*, not very far diſtant from *Agaunum*, where this Martyrdom is ſaid to have happened, and he had converſed ſometimes with *Theodorus* Biſhop of *Octodurum* or *Martigni*, where *Agaunum* is ſituated Both theſe Biſhops were preſent at the Council of *Aquileia*, aſſembled to give a deciſion in the cauſe of *Palladius* and *Secundianus*, *Arrian* Biſhops in *Illyria*. They met again at *Milan*, where *Theodorus* ſigned the Letter, which St. *Ambroſe* and the other Biſhops wrote to Pope *Siricius*, concerning the condemnation of *Jovinian*, who had uttered blaſphemous Expreſſions againſt the Virginity of the Bleſſed Mother of God. And though the falſe St. *Eucherius*, in the Letter already related, does write to the Biſhop *Salvius*, That *Theodorus*, whom he calls *vir anteriorıs Temporis* had informed *Iſaac Biſhop* of *Geneva* of all the circumſtances of the Martyrdom of the *Thebean Legion*, it does not appear, that he ever ſpoke of it to St. *Ambroſe*, ſeeing there is not the leaſt notice tak'n of it in all the Works of this Father.

But

But let us come now to another ſort of Writers, and ask the Fathers, who have compoſed Chronologies or Church-Hiſtories. Theſe perhaps will tell us ſomething of the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion*; for this is not ſo inconſiderable a Tranſaction as can be ſuppos'd to have been overlook'd, or loſt amongſt the Croud of thoſe great Events, which they had to relate. It is a memorable matter of Fact, worthy of their Pens, and to be recommended to Poſterity; for it is the Martyrdom of a whole Legion, and the moſt Famous Hiſtorians of the Church, either liv'd at the time of this ſuppos'd Martyrdom, or wrote about a hundred Years after; I mean *Euſebius*, *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Theodoret*, *Evagrius*, *Jerom*, *Oroſius*, *Sulpitius Severus*: If this Martyrdom were true, it is impoſſible, that they ſhould have been ignorant of it, and had they known it, 'tis not to be imagin'd, they would all have conſpired together to leave us in the dark about it.

To begin with *Euſebius*, of whom thoſe who favour him leaſt, as *Joſeph Scaliger*, do yet agree, *that with great care he hath ſearch'd into the Original Pieces concerning the Foundation of the Firſt Sees, the ſucceſſion of their Biſhops, the Perſecutions moved by enraged* Pagans *againſt the Primitive Chriſtian Religion, the many Conflicts of the Bleſſed Martyrs, for its Defenſe and the Victories which their Faith and conſtancy have obtained over Infidelity and Errour.* St. *Jerom*, or whoſoever is the Author of the Letter to *Chromatius* and *Heliodorus*, agrees with the Remarks of *Preſident Couſin* upon the care and diligence of

Mr. le Preſident Couſin dans ſon advertiſſement. le Hiſtoire de Euſebe.

of *Euſebius* in collecting the Acts of the Martyrs. It is ſaid in that Letter, that the Emperour *Conſtantine* at his arrival at *Ceſarea* permitted *Euſebius* to ask him whatever he had moſt a mind to, and that *Euſebius* deſired him to command, that they ſhould ſend him from all the Courts and Tribunals of Judicature throughout the Empire, all the Proceſſes, Tryals and Sentences concerning Martyrs, that ſo he might be particularly inform'd of their right Names, Qualities and Numbers, and alſo of the different kinds of their Torments and Death, and of the Provinces, Towns, and Days of their Excecutions, and laſtly with what Patience and Courage they had ſuffered their Torments. Therefore *Antipater* Biſhop of *Boſtra* in *Arabia*, thinking to obſcure the Glory and Reputation of *Euſebius*, ſaid in his confutation of *Origen's* Apology. *I allow* Euſebius *to be excellently vers'd in Hiſtory*, and that there is nothing in the *Monuments* of Antiquity which he is unacquainted with; but the Emperours Authority favouring his deſign, it was an eaſy thing for him to gather up whatever Writings were ſcattered all over the World. So that *Euſebius* having ſo many ways of being imformed of the Truth, of the *Agaunian* Martyrdom, no body can deny but he is a well qualify'd Witneſs, to be call'd and heard upon this Matter of Fact. And ſo much the rather, becauſe he not only was alive at the time of this Martyrdom, but of age to know what was then tranſacted. In the firſt Book of *Conſtantine's* Life he ſaith, that in his youth he firſt ſaw this

Prince

Prince in *Paleſtina*, in the Retinue of the Emperour *Dioclesian*; And in the Third Book of his Church Hiſtory, ſpeaking of *Dionyſius* of *Alexandria*, he ſaith, that it was in his time that he was raiſed to the Honour of the *Epiſcopal* Chair; ſeeing therefore that it is agreed on all hands, that *Dionyſius* of *Alexandria* dyed in the twelfth Year of the Empire of *Gallienus*'s Reign; *Euſebius* his Birth muſt neceſſarily precede the Death of this Prince. The Learned Doctor *Cave* conjectures, that he was born about the Year 270. As to the time of *Gallienus*'s Death we are under great uncertainties. Cardinal *Baronius* placeing it in the Year 269, upon the Teſtimony of *Euſebius*, who will have him to have Reigned but fifteen years, but *Antonio Pagi* is of a different opinion and thinks he lived ſome few Years longer and this upon the Authority of a Medal of *Gallienus*; ſpoken of by *Mezabarba*, with this Inſcription P. M. TR. PO. XVI. CON. VII. So that it appears to be a difficult thing to aſſign preciſely the time of *Euſebius* his birth. But it is not our buſineſs here to caſt the Horoſcope of this Father, or to make an exact Calculation of the time of his Nativity, it is ſufficient to our purpoſe that the circumſtances here ſpecify'd will make it appear that *Euſebius* was at leaſt fifteen or ſixteen Years old, when *Maximian* went into *Gaule*, in the Year 285, the very time wherein the *Theb. Legion* was ſuppos'd to have been Maſſacred. We are then much in the right to produce *Euſebius*, in this cauſe as a Witneſs very fit to inform us about the Truth or Falſehood of the Martyrdom of the

καθ' ἡμᾶς τὴν Ἐπισκοπὴν εἰλαχώς.

Theb.

Theb. Legion. But in all his Works there is not one Word ſpok'n either of this *Legion*, or of this Martyrdom. However he had often a fair opportunity to ſpeak of it, ſeeing that his whole Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory is chiefly filled up with long accounts of the Perſecutions and Conflicts of Martyrs. His Eighth Book is nothing but an ample Narrative, both of *Diocleſian* and *Maximians* Cruelties, and of all the great Examples of Zeal and Conſtancy, which the Chriſtians of all Orders and Conditions ſoever gave in thoſe times. If any ancient Writer had occaſion to ſpeak of the *Theb. Legion*, without doubt it was *Euſebius*, but ſince he hath ſaid nothing of it, his ſilence is an Hiſtorical Demonſtration, that it is only a meer Fable. To this we might add, that the ſame ſilence is obſerved by *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Theodoret* and *Evagrius*, who have now and then pick'd up ſome Facts that are wanting in *Euſebius*; That St. *Jerom* who hath followed *Euſebius* in his Chronology, and carefully collected thoſe things that have eſcaped his knowledge, ſaith nothing of the *Theb. Legion*; That *Sulpitius Severus*, whoſe Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory goes beyond the *Æra* of Martyrs, and who is ſo much noted for his great credulity, and fondneſs of opinion about Saints and Miracles, had not heard of it at the beginning of the fifth Age; That we find it not in *Paulus Oroſius*, who ſpeaks of the *Bagauds*, of *Amandus* and *Ælianus*, of *Maximian*'s Expedition into *Gaule*, and greedily ſwallows any thing that does but ſerve his turn, whether well grounded or no (as Monſieur *Dupin* obſerves *tom.* 3. Dupin. *Nov. Bibl.*

Voſſ. *de Hiſt. Lat. lib.* 2. *cap.* 14.

ſerves) and ſometimes even debaſeth the Dignity of Hiſtory ſo much as to inſert into it meer popular Reports (according to *Voſſius*'s Judgment.) However the Fable of the *Theb. Legion*, being not yet brought into the World in the Reign of the Emperours *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, wherein he lived, we do not ſee, he hath adorned the Seven Books of his Hiſtory with the recital of it. It remains then only for us to examin, whether according to the Principles of the Doctors of the *Romiſh* Church, we may not infer a good Concluſion from this Negative Argument.

Joannis Launoij *Diſſ. de Auth. Arg. neg. p.* 190.

John Launoy a Doctor of *Paris* in his Diſſertation upon the Authority of Negative Arguments, lays down this Rule, that we may reaſonably conclude the untruth of a Fact from it's not being atteſted either by contemporary Writers, or by any Author within two hundred Years after. He confeſſes, *That this Space of two hundred Years is indeed too long; but that he feared, if he had chalked out a ſhorter, he ſhould thereby have drawn upon himſelf the reproaches and calumnies of moſt People, who are not willing, that too ſtrict a Search ſhould be made after Truth.* But what if Mr. *de Launoy* had been ſo very complaiſant to the *Monks*, and the Admirers of Fables and Legends, as to throw 'em in t'other fifty Years, yet this would not in the leaſt have weakened the ſtrength of our Argument, ſince that 'tis almoſt Three hundred Years after *Maximian*'s Expedition into *Gaule*, that not one Writer hath ſpoken of the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion*. 'Tis true, that upon the Superſtitious Party of the *Popiſh* Church's being alarm'd by Mr. *de Launoy*'s Book,

Book, becauſe they ſaw, that the Method in it was like to pull down a great number of their Saints, and would bring into contempt their Miracles and Reliques, *John Baptiſt Thiers*, a Divine of *Paris*, endeavour'd to re aſſure them by a Diſſertation in anſwer to that of Mr *de Launoy*, which indeed he did not think worth his while to anſwer, or to ſhew the vanity of his Arguments and Evaſions. Now this is the Tenet of *John Baptiſt* of *Thiers*: *We grant that a negative Argument ought to be of ſome force in Hiſtorical Accounts, when in matter of very ancient Facts, the Argument is taken from the general ſilence of Grave, Learned and Diligent Writers, who were not lightly wrought upon, but prudent in their Judgment and Choice, and who have ſucceeded one another during many Ages.* Where notwithſtanding that all his Words be exactly meaſured and fitted to his deſign, *viz.* to render negative Arguments of no uſe, by putting them under impoſſible conditions, *&c.* yet nevertheleſs we deſire no other conceſſions, than what he himſelf grants: For the Fact here in queſtion is very Ancient, and no body can deny but the Writers here ſpoken of, are ſome of the moſt Grave, Learned and *Diligent* that ever appeared in the Church; and that for a continued ſucceſſion of two or three Ages, and yet not one of them but is wholly ſilent upon the Martyrdom of the *Theb.* Legion. Now after this long ſilence, on the one ſide, let us ſee who thoſe were who firſt open'd their Mouths on the other, and who ſhould theſe be but two Authors who lived towards the end of the ſixth Century;

Joann. Bap. *Thiers Exercit.* 53. *part.* 6.

namely *Gregory* of *Tours* and *Venantius Honorius Fortunatus*; the latter of which was a Poet, and consequently more likely to make use of their old Privilege in the Verse, *Pictoribus atq; Poetis*, He hath Translated into Verse an Abridgment of St. *George's Legend*, which *Baronius* confesses to have been originally writ by the *Arrians*. Seeing then that this Poet was so grosly mistaken in attributing the Character of a Saint to one who was an *Arrian* and a wicked Man, may we not think but his credulity might have been likewise imposed upon concerning another matter of Fact, of an older date than this was? And as for *Gregory* of *Tours*, Mr. *Dupin* observes, that he was very credulous and easy in the matter of Miracles, and made no scruple of recounting uncertain and fabulous Histories. Which agrees with what Abbot *Hilduinus* wrote concerning him to the Emperor *Lewis*: *We ought to Pardon the Simplicity of this Pious Man, for having written several things contrary to the Truth of History, not indeed out of any crafty design of imposing upon the World, but meerly through his credulity.* And seeing, that *Fortunatus* took a journey to *Tours*, where he hoped to have been cured of his sore eyes, by the intercession of St. *Martin*, and that he had a great esteem and affection for *Gregory*, it is very likely, that he received all that he knew concerning the *Theb.* Legion from this good Bishop. Now to let you see the very Foundation on which *Gregories* own belief of this matter was establish'd, I shall only transcribe the Place where he speaks of it in the Tenth Book of his History of *France*. *I found*, saith

Greg. *Turon. lib.* 10. *Hist. Franc. cap.* 3. & *Glor. Miracul. cap.* 76. Venant. Fortun. *lib.* 2. *carm.* 15.

Dupin *Nov. Bibl. Tom.* 5. *p.* 90.

ſaith *he, a little Cheſt in St.* Martin's *Treaſury, in which our Fathers had depoſited the Reliques of the* Agaunian *Martyrs, as I was informed by ſome very aged Prieſts. The very Seal which their Piety had put to it, was by old Age and Rottenneſs quite worn away; and it happened, that during the ſolemn Office that was celebrated to their Honour in the Eve of their Feſtival, it came into my thoughts to take a Torch, and view them more carefully. Now while I was a ſearching with great attention, one of the Porters told me, Here is a Stone with a Cover upon it, what may be in it, I cannot tell, neither did my Predeceſſors, to whoſe Cuſtody theſe things were committed, know any more of it than my ſelf; if you pleaſe, I will bring it hither, that we may ſee what it contains; and when he had brought it, I opened it, and found a little Silver Trunk, wherein were not only ſome Reliques of the Martyrs of the Bleſſed Legion, but alſo of ſeveral Holy Martyrs and Confeſſors. We found likewiſe in the ſame Trunk, ſeveral other hallowed Stones, with ſome Reliques of the Apoſtles and other Martyrs.* From which Words, we may judge not only of the Character of this *Gregory* of *Tours*, but alſo of the genius of his Age. However, both he and *Venantius* were without doubt great Men, conſidering the time they lived in; nor do we ſuſpect either of them of Fraud or Impoſture, but only ſay, that they were too credulous, and the *Chriſtians* were then ſtrangely affected and hankering after Reliques and Miracles. Do but read the 30th Epiſtle of the Third Book of *Gregory*, the 28th Chapter of St. *Auſtin, de Opere Monachorum*,

the 62d Canon of the Council of *Lions*, and the 7th Act of the Second Council of *Nicea*, and you may ſee what a ſcandalous Trade was then droven with the Limbs and Bones of Martyrs, which were broke in Peices, and tranſported from Town to Town, and from one Province into another, under pretence of Devotion. St. *Auſtin* even then lamenting, ſaid, *That the Bodies of ſeveral Perſons were had in veneration upon the Earth, whoſe Souls were tormented in Hell-fire.* And it was not without reaſon that he thus complain'd, for do but read St. *Martin's* Life, in *Sulpitius Severus*, who ſaith there, *That the People of* Tours *ran in great Crouds to a Place where they thought ſome Martyrs had been buried. That the common Tradition was, that the Altar there had been erected by the ancient Biſhops of* Tours. *But that St.* Martin *having not been able to learn any thing for certain from the eldeſt Prieſts of his Clergy, concerning the Names of thoſe Martyrs, and the time of their Death, was in great perplexity and doubt about this matter, fearing on the one ſide to cauſe ſome prejudice to Religion, if he ſhould forbear his uſual coming to that Place, and on the other to increaſe Superſtition, if he had authorized it by his preſence. But one day being gone thither with ſome of his Brethren, and having pray'd to God to diſcover to him who it was who was there buried; he ſaw on his Left-hand a frightful and deformed Spectre, which he commanded to tell what it was. Whereunto the Shade anſwered, I am a Robber condemned formerly for Crimes to an ignominious Death. The Error of the People makes me here to be honoured, but I have no part with the Martyrs,*

tyrs, they being in Glory, and I in Torments. After which, St. Martin *cauſed the Altar to be thrown down, and freed the People of* Tours *from that groſs Superſtition.* This Example alone may ſuffice to ſhew, that in matter of Reliques, Impoſtures are no new Device. Moreover, it ſerves to diſcover the falſe Zeal of the *Chriſtians*, of the Sixth Age, and the ignorance and baſe connivance of the Biſhops and Prieſts, in not repreſſing the indiſcretion of it. *Sulpitius Severus* hath told us juſt now, that it was the common Opinion that the Altar upon the Grave of that Robber had been erected by the ancient Biſhops of *Tours*. Now after this, is it ſo much to be wondred at, for the Good-Man *Gregory*, who a Hundred Years after was made Biſhop of *Tours*, to be deceived himſelf by ſome uncertain Tradition, or that he ſhould give ſo much Credit to an Inſcription upon the little Trunk, in which were ſuppoſed to be ſhut up the Reliques of the *Agaunian* Martyrs? Now from St. *Martin*'s time, the evil was ſo far from diminiſhing, that it increaſed more and more. Religion and Piety did then it ſeems chiefly conſiſt in ſearching the Graves, looking for the Bodies of Saints, erecting Altars, and contriving all ſorts of ways to honour them. The Sixth Age having brought into the Church, St. *Bennet* and his Rule, his Children departed very ſoon from the Inſtitution of their Holy Founder, applying themſelves wholly to get plentiful Poſſeſſions, and large Revenues. The Martyrs, their Reliques and Miracles, were the propereſt means in the World for that purpoſe, and

God knows how they improv'd the knack they had already got of making uſe of them; for it is certain, that they owe moſt of their vaſt Incomes and Eſtates to meer Dreams and *Chimæras* like that of the *Agaunian* Martyrs. Then the Old Saints grew out of date, and new ones came in Faſhion, being reputed to exceed the others in multiplicity of Miracles. Therefore they found the way to dig every Day a new one out of the Ground, as if the Prieſts of thoſe times had made uſe of a *Divining Rod*, to find out Bodies of Saints. No wonder therefore if ſome Martyrs of the Second and Third Age, unknown to *Euſebius*, *Oroſius*, and *Sulpitius Severus*, were diſcovered ſince by ſome Monks of the Eighth and Ninth Century.

It is very probable, if I may give my Opinion, that the Acts of the *Agaunian* Martyrs were forged towards the end of the Sixth Age, or at the beginning of the Seventh, the Author of them ſaith, *That the Names of the* Thebean *Souldiers are written in Heaven, and that only thoſe following were come to his knowledge*, viz. Mauritius, Exuper, Candidus, Orſus, *and the Two* Victors. But it ſeems not long after, ſome others began to peep out; *Ado*, Archbiſhop of *Vienna*, who wrote towards the middle of the Ninth Century, adds to theſe *Maloſius*, *Victor*, *Innocent*, *Vitalis*, *Gerion*, *Alexander*, *Secundus* and *Antoninus*. *Uſuard* a Benedictine Monk of St. *Germans*, had the good luck to find out Two more, namely *Caſſius* and *Florentius*. In the *Archives* of *Treves* is kept the Hiſtory of *St. Thirſus*, wherein is mentioned another

another *Thebean* Souldier, call'd *Bonifacius*. In *Burgundy* ſome Churches are conſecrated to *Viator*, and *St. Amour*, who, by the Authors who have written their Lives, are ſaid to have been *Agaunian* Martyrs. So that we ſee already Fourteen or Fifteen of them, who were not come to the knowledge of the pretended St. *Eucherius*. But further Diſcoveries have been made yet, for *one Day telleth another*. St. *Paul* exhorted the *Chriſtians*, to ſeek the things that are above, but the Monks of the Tenth Century, preſſed them to nothing ſo much, as to look into the things that are below, and to ſearch into the Graves. And though Chriſt had ſaid, ſpeaking of himſelf, that *where the Body was, there the Eagles ſhould gather alſo*; yet the *Chriſtians* did now, no longer with *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, frequent the Sepulchre of our Lord. The Death of Chriſt was to them an old Story, and grown out of date, and new Objects were then required to excite the Zeal and Devotions of *Chriſtians*. Hence it was, that from time to time, ſome *Thebean* Souldier or other, was digged out of the Ground, and propoſed to their Veneration. The Citizens of *Pignerol* make their boaſt of having there in the *Abbey* of our Lady, the Corps of St. *Tiberius*. In the Dioceſs of *Saluces*, are ſhewed the Tombs of *Conſtantius* and *Theophredus* or *Jafredus*, and a new Inſcription clapt thereon, cauſeth them to be worſhipped as Souldiers of the *Thebean* Legion. Some Years ago paſſing by *Foſſano*, I had the curioſity to go and view the Place, where according to the Tradition of that

Pſal. 19.

Col. 3.

Town, *Alverius* and *Sebaſtianus*, *Thebean* Souldiers, are ſaid to be Buried. *Garnier* in his Hiſtory of *St. Alexander*, ſaith, that the Bodies of *Caſſius*, *Severinus*, *Licinius* and *Secundus*, lye depoſited at *Como* in the *Milaneſe*. *Crantzius* tells us, that at *Brunſwick*, they believe, that they have ſome Martyrs of *Agaunum*. The City of *Colen* vaunteth to have a great number of them. But above all, the Town of *Turin* brags of having been enrich'd with their Spoils. In the Abbey of *St. Solutor* are kept ſome Reliques with this Title, *Reliquiæ Sancti Benigni* Thebenſis. They ſhew in the ſame Abbey, a Manuſcript, wherein are recorded the Lives of *Solutor*, *Adventor* and *Octavius*, ſet off with all thoſe incidents and flouriſhes, which generally adorn the common Legends. The Jeſuites of *Turin* have made a ſudden diſcovery all at once, of *Ciro*, *John*, *Cacuſat*, *Chryſogon*, *Cyriacus*, *Felix*, *Fortunatus* and *Achilles*, as they inform us in the Hiſtory which they have publiſhed of the Holy Martyrs, *Abondius* and *Abondantius*. When you have paſſed the Bridge of *Turin*, and taken your way towards the Mountain that leads to *Chiers*, you find on the ſide of the River *Pô*, a little Chappel, where there is an Inſcription which I had amongſt my Papers, but by miſchance it hath been almoſt blotted out; however here is the remainder of it. *D. O. M. Beatæ Virgini Mariæ Thebæorum Martyrum .... Ex vetuſtate labentem Ædiculam, ampliorem .... Divinoque Miniſterio aptiorem Comes Gregorius Johannus ..... a Solo excitavit*

Crantzius Sax. 7. 16.

excitavit...; an 1654. I remember that the Names of two *Theb.* Souldiers are to be ſeen there. And it is certain, that if in travelling through *Italy*, One would be at the trouble to take information of the Saints of every particular Place, and to read both the printed and manuſcript Lives of Saints that are kept in the Archives of the Cathedral Churches, there would great numbers of *Theb.* Souldiers ſtart up from behind the buſhes, who had no other being but what they received from the Monks of the laſt Ages, in order to ſerve their turns and promote the Trade they made of the poor People's ſuperſtition. However it be, as the caſe ſtands, I have in this Diſſertation ſtruck of from the *Romiſh* Church 6666 Saints, as the learned Father *Sirmond* with one daſh of his Pen had taken lately from them eleven thouſand. For having met with theſe Words in an Old Martyrology, *SS Vrſula & Unde ci milla V. M.* i. e. *Undecimilla, Virgin* and *Martyr*, he ſhew'd the ſhameful blunder of thoſe who imagin'd that *Unde ci milla* with the *V* and *M* had been an abbreviation to expreſs eleven thouſand Virgins. *Mr. de Launoy* had both the honeſty and courage to publiſh what he thought of St. *Bruno*, and ſeveral other Saints; and might he have enjoy'd the protection, either of the Court or Clergy, he would have been a great inſtrument of Reformation in the *Roman* Worſhip. I was told, That this Mr. *de Launoy*, being once at dinner with the Curate of a Country Pariſh, in the Dioceſs of *Mans*, on the Feſtival of the Chief Saint of that Village, deſi-

red

red the Curate to tell him the Name of that Saint. You muſt excuſe me for that, anſwered the Curate, for ſhould you once go about to pull down my Saint, as you have done ſo many others, I ſhould be undone, and my Boors would find themſelves without a Patron. Mr. *de Valois* ſaith, that the Life of St. *Catharine*, Virgin and Martyr is but a Fabulous Legend, from the beginning to the end; and likewiſe, that of St. *Euſtachius* Patron of the biggeſt Pariſh in *Paris*; and as for what is related of St. *Lazarus*, of St. *Martha*, of *Mary Magdalen*, and of the St. *Baume* he added, *credant qui volent, as for me I ſhall never believe a Word of it, and I hold their arrival into* France *to be one of the moſt Fabulous things in the World.* Mr. *Menage*, in his Book of Learned Women, having enumerated amongſt them St. *Catharine*, takes Notice, That *Baronius* ſuſpected it to be but a Fable. And it is material to obſerve by the by, that *Baronius*'s ſuſpition was grounded upon the ſilence of *Euſebius* which we have alſo alledged againſt the *Agaunian* Martyrs. Moreover, Mr. *Menage* tells us, that *Francis de Harlay*, Arch-Biſhop of *Paris*, having choſen ſome of the moſt underſtanding Men of his Clergy in 1680, to reviſe and reform the Breviary for the uſe of the Church of *Paris*, theſe Doctors thought fit to expunge the Life of St. *Catharine*, looking upon the Acts of her Martyrdom, as a meer Fiction. The Biſhops of St. *Pons*, in the year 1684, took from the Calendar of his Dioceſs about ſixty Holy-days, amongſt which were St. *Amarante*, the Immaculate Conception

Valeſiana *pag.* 48,

Menagij *animad. in Diog. La. pag.* 493.

Baron. *Ann. ad an.* 317. *Sect.* 23. *Gumdoleamus ab* Euſebio *prætermiſſa* &c.

ception of the Bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, the Chair of St. *Peter*, St. *Ignatius Loyola*, &c. He is a Prelate, who has very much diſtinguiſhed himſelf both by his Learning and Piety, but who had the misfortune to incur the hatred of the Jeſuits as being a Diſciple of the famous Biſhop of *Alet*; and alſo to diſpleaſe the Court for refuſing to perſecute the Proteſtants of his Dioceſs, and not following Cardinal *Bonzi*, and the Biſhops of his Cabal, in Voting in the States of *Languedoc* the Subſidies that were demanded by the *French* King. Therefore the Jeſuites looking for an occaſion to bring him into Trouble, the Abbot of *Aulergues*, his Archdeacon, devoted himſelf to ſerve their Revenge. So that if an Archdeacon is call'd in the *Canons* of the Church *Oculus Epiſcopi*, it may be well ſaid, that here the Light of the Body became darkneſs. This Abbot appealed from his Biſhop againſt the Reformation of his Calendar to the Parliament of *Toulouſe*. The Jeſuites who cared but little for the other Saints, but reſented very much the diſgrace put upon their St. *Ignatius*, procured an Order from the Court to that Parliament, that they ſhould favour the Abbot's Cauſe without further delay. I was then at *Toulouſe*, where I was oblig'd to ſtay during the Months of *July*, *Auguſt* and *September*, at which time the Cauſe was Pleaded. I was preſent at the hearing, and the Kings Attorney broke into a furious paſſion againſt the Biſhop of St. *Pons*, and taking occaſion from the Feaſt of the Immaculate Conception, to ſpeak of the Honours due to the Bleſſed Virgin, he carry'd them

them as far as *Benaventure*, *Bernardine* and *Craſſet*. But at laſt the Archdeacon's Appeal was declared frivolous and faulty. The Biſhop of St. *Pons*, was maintained in the power which the Councils of the *Gallican* Church gave to their Biſhops of making a Calendar, and regulating the Church Service of their Dioceſs. And this Sentence was the effect of the Virtue and Honeſty of the firſt Preſident, who without contradiction was a Great Magiſtrate and worthy of a better Age.

I have related theſe Facts upon this Account only, that they of the *Romiſh* Religion, who may read this Work of mine, may ſee, that I had reaſon to queſtion the Truth of the Acts of ſome of their Saints, ſince ſome of the greateſt Men of their Communion have done the ſame, and do agree that many falſe ones are found amongſt them. And if ſome Preachers ſhould not like our Endeavours in expoſing the Falſhood of the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion*; becauſe hereby they find themſelves at a loſs for want of ſo many fine Paſſages, elevated thoughts, and an Example ſo moving, and ready at hand, whenever they had a mind to exhort their Hearers to patience and perſeverance in the Faith, we need only to recommend them the reading their *Euſebius*, wherein they ſhall find great numbers of true Martyrs, whoſe Examples are much more inſtructive, and fit to move the affections, then the Martyrdom of the *Theb. Legion*, is pretended to be. It is neither *Arthur* of *Britain*, nor the *Roland* of *Arioſto*, nor the *Renaldo* of *Taſſo*, which thoſe

thoſe who are intruſted with the firſt Education and Inſtruction of young Princes do propoſe to them for a Pattern of Imitation, but thoſe Heroes, who had a real being in the world, ſuch as *Scipio*, *Hanibal* and *Auguſtus*. In like manner Church Hiſtory being full of the glorious Conflicts and great Examples of the Piety of true Martyrs, Chriſtian Princes would betray the Holineſs of their Miniſtry, did they propoſe to their People falſe Martyrs and *Counterband* Saints as Mr. *de Valois* us'd to call them.

Saints de Contrebande.

It alludes to prohibited Wares unlawfully and ſurreptitiouſly imported without paying Cuſtom, which are call'd in French Marchandiſes *de* Contrebande.

CHAP. XIX.

That the Fabulous Relations of the pretended Agaunian *Martyrs, and other fictitious Saints, are ſufficient to deſtroy all the Reaſons brought by the* Roman *Church to juſtify the Worſhip they pay to Saints.*

THE firſt ſhift of the *Romiſh* Church in this matter, is, to diſtinguiſh Worſhip into Abſolute and Relative, Mediate and Immediate. They ſay, that God alone ought to be the Object of abſolute and immediate Worſhip, but that the Relative

lative and Mediate Worſhip, may be paid to Saints and Angels, ſince it paſſeth only through them, and terminates in God. That this is but a mere Evaſion, our Writers have ſhewed a thouſand times. And more than that, they have proved, that upon Examination of the Matter of Fact, it is not true neither, that the *Romiſh* Church renders to the deceaſed Saints, only mediate and relative Honours. For this diſtinction hath place only in their Schools, being no way diſcernible in their Practice. They make no diſtinction as to Place, ſince they worſhip both God and the Saints in the ſame Churches; nor in reſpect of time, for as God hath his, ſo the Saints have likewiſe their Holy-days; nor yet in the Church-Service, ſince the Saints are mentioned four or five times in the Service of the Maſs, which they offer moſt immediately to God; nay, not ſo much as in the bodily Poſtures of the Worſhippers, ſince they fall down on their Knees, and make the ſame bodily Proſtrations before God and his Saints. Neither can it be diſtinguiſh'd in the quality of their Petitions, ſince they who pray to Saints, ask pardon of them for their Sins, and the Grace of the Holy Ghoſt; No more is it in the multitude of their Prayers; for they will ſay ten *Ave Maria*'s to one *Pater noſter*. So that the Saints do, if I may ſo ſay, reap all the Worſhip of the *Roman* Religion, and God, who ſhould gather the whole, hath only the Tithe of it. This diſtinction therefore hath place no where but in Diſputes, no real difference being perceivable between the Honours paid to God, and the Saints. Our Writers have likewiſe diſcuſſed

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the Queſtion, *de Jure*, *viz.* whether it be lawful to beſtow upon the Creatures a Worſhip which terminates in God. Their Writings are full of good Reaſons ſhewing that religious Worſhip is the Glory of God's Excellency, and that not ſo much as the leaſt portion of this Glory can be beſtow'd upon the Saints, without provoking the anger of that Jealous God. 'Tis true, that in coming near to God to know him, we may make uſe of the Creatures as ſteps to the knowledge of Him: But when we approach God in the duty of Worſhip, all our Thoughts, Attention and Affections ought wholly to be fix'd upon him alone. We ought then to baniſh the thoughts of all created beings out of our Minds, and ſo to Bleſs, Pray to and Worſhip him, as if there were none but He and We in the World. But when all is done, what uſe ſoever they may make in their Diſputes of the diſtinction of Worſhip into Abſolute and Relative, 'tis certain the Doctors of the *Roman* Church can make none of it, when we charge them with calling upon ſuch Saints, as never had any being in the World, ſuch for inſtance, as *St. Longinus*, *St. Chriſtopher*, *St. Catharine*, the eleven thouſand Virgins, and the Souldiers of the *Thebean* Legion. They cannot ſurely have the face to ſay, That the Worſhip paid to theſe pretended Saints, hath any relation to God, or terminates in him. And therefore they ought to confeſs, that their Church hath erred, and is yet in errour.

Secondly, The *Romiſh* Doctors, to juſtifie the Worſhip they pay to the Saints, ſay, that all their

their Prayers to them do amount to no more, according to the intention of their Church, than barely to desire them that they would please to pray to God for them. To which it hath been replyed and abundantly proved, that the Use and Form of the Terms, do determine the quality of Prayers, and not the Intention of the Church; that if the Matter, or the Form of Prayers be faulty, it is not the Intention of the Church that can rectify them; and that the Common People mind only the literal signification of Prayers, and never think while they are pronouncing them, of giving a Catholick sense to Idolatrous Expressions. Why then do they put so many ignorant People in danger of making unlawful Prayers? Why do they give Protestants so great an occasion of Scandal? Why do they not take out of their Prayer-Books and Breviaries all those Forms of Prayer in which they ask the Saints *to have mercy on them, to cleanse them from their Sins by their Merits, to illuminate their hearts, and to excite in them a true Repentance?* If this Principle of the *Roman* Church had any good foundation, I don't see why she might not as well have put an *Arrian Creed* into her *Liturgy*, with a warning to her Children to follow her Intentions, and give an Orthodox sense to that *Heretical-Creed.* It would prove a hard matter to reduce to an *Orate pro nobis* that Prayer used at the Consecration of their Altars; *Sanctify O Lord this Stone to thine Honour, to the Honour of the Virgin* Mary, *and to the Honour of all Saints.* You see here the Saints and the Blessed Virgin joyn'd equally with God.

Monsr.

Monſ. *de le Habeſpine* Biſhop of *Orleans* hath laboured in vain to juſtify this Prayer. And from hence we muſt neceſſarily conclude, that the *Romiſh* Church pays to the Saints a Religious Worſhip of the ſame nature with that which ſhe gives to God; For otherwiſe *Bellarmine* does not argue well when he proves from the Form of Baptiſm, that the Holy Ghoſt, being joined therein with the Father and the Son, ought therefore to be eſteemed, God, as well as the Father and the Son. *Go and Baptiſe all Nations in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghoſt.* But what can the *Romiſh* Church reply, when it is objected that ſhe prays to Saints who never had any being, as *St. Chriſtopher*, *St. Catharine*, the eleven thouſand Virgins, and the Souldiers of the *Theb. Legion?* Let theſe Prayers be reduced as much as they pleaſe to the general Spirit of the Church, yet ſhe cannot juſtify them, and therefore ſhe muſt confeſs that ſhe hath erred, and is yet in error.

Albaſp. p. 250. fol imppar.

Bellarm. *lib. 1. de Chr. cap. 13.*

Thirdly, They of the Church of *Rome*, to excuſe the Worſhip they pay to the Saints, ſay, That they pray to them in the ſame manner as we pray our living Brethren to intercede for us. But had they not thus explain'd their meaning by the Biſhop of *Meaux's* Pen, we would hardly believe that they were in good earneſt. What! Is there then no difference between the Prayers which the Sick Proteſtants deſire to be made for them in their Churches, that God would comfort and relieve them in their ſeveral neceſſities, and thoſe which the Papiſts direct to their Saints? When the Proteſtants deſire theſe Offices of Cha-

rity of their Brethren, do they ask them after the ſame manner, and in the ſame order as the *Romiſh* Church implores the Interceſſion and Aſſiſtance of her Saints? Do they conſecrate Holy-days and Altars to them? Build them Churches? Make Vows and Pilgrimages to their Honour? Do they light Wax-candles before their Images? Approach them with Cenſers? Preſent them with Offerings? And make Proceſſions and Confraternities in honour of their Memories? Quite contrary. Our Brethren are there preſent with us, where they ſee our neceſſities with their own Eyes, and we deſire them to joyn with us in Prayer. We don't look upon them as if they were of a ſuperior Order to us, but as Fellow Labourers, ſubject to the ſame weakneſſes and infirmities as we are, and thereby ingaged to compaſſionate our ſufferings. Our practice is authorized by the Example of the Faithful of all Ages, and by the expreſs command of the Apoſtle *St. James*, who exhorteth us to Pray one for another. But the *Romiſh* practice is very far from having a Title to any of theſe advantages. Under the Old Teſtament no Prayers were ever made to the deceaſed Saints, though the Faithful prayed one for another, as we do. Notwithſtanding they had at that time Saints whoſe Holineſs could not be call'd in queſtion, ſince God himſelf had, if I may ſo ſpeak, canonized *Elias* and *Enoch*. All theſe Anſwers are ſolid and good. But how can they apply this? Or what other Anſwer can they make, when we charge them with praying to ſuch Saints as never were in the World, ſuch

St. James eb. 5. *v.* 16.

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as *St. Chriſtopher*, *St. Catharine*, the eleven thouſand Virgins, and the Souldiers of the *Theb.* Legion, ſeeing theſe Saints were only meer fictions and the invention of *Legend*-Writers? They cannot ſure anſwer that they Pray to theſe after the ſame Manner, as we do to our living Brethren; and therefore they ought to confeſs that they have erred, and do remain ſtill in error.

The *Fourth* Evaſion of the *Romiſh* Church is to have recourſe to the equivocal Senſe of the Terms Worſhip and Adoration. They ſay, that there is a Supream Worſhip and Adoration of *Latria*, and that God alone deſerves this Worſhip and Adoration; but that there is an inferiour Worſhip and a Service of *Dulia*, which we ought to pay to Angels and Saints. But this Diſtinction is not in, nor is it grounded upon, Scripture. For St. *Paul* makes uſe of the Term *Dulia*, when he ſpeaks of the Supream Worſhip, telling the *Theſſalonians*, *That they turn'd to God from Idols to ſerve the Living and True God.* And the *Septuagint* have uſed it in the ſame Senſe, 1. *Sam.c.*7. *v.*3. and *Pſ.* 11. *v.*11. and on the contrary, they have expreſſed by that of *Latria*, the Services which Men do one to another in that Threatning, which God makes to his People, *That they ſhould ſerve their Enemies, which God would ſend againſt them in hunger and in thirſt and in nakedneſs.* But beſides, this Diſtinction is very inſignificant; for let the Terms be never ſo Equivocal, yet the things expreſſed by them are not ſo. For Churches, Feſtivals, Altars, Vows, Offerings, Lights, and Proceſſions are not Equivocal things, but determined to the

1. Theſſ. 1. *verſ.* 9.

Deut. 28. *verſ.* 48.

higheſt ſort of Religious Worſhip. To prove this, let an *Indian* or a *Chineſe* go into a *Popiſh* Church, tell him, That this Temple is conſecrated to *Francis* of *Aſſiſe*; that this is his Holy-day, and that they are going to make a Proceſſion to his Honour; That the Image which he ſeeth adorned with ſo many flowers, and illuminated with ſo many Torches is his Repreſentation. And let him ſee afterwards all the People proſtrating themſelves before it, in order to the Addreſſing their Prayers to it: And then ask him, what this People is a doing? He will anſwer, that they adore St. *Francis*, or his Image, the ſimple Notions of Nature leading him to that Anſwer, becauſe all the Actions of this People are determined to Religion, which being taken altogether are the formal and diſtinct Signs of the Supreme Worſhip. And therefore it is in vain for them to endeavour to palliate the Matter by a pretended equivocal uſe of Words. Had the *Romiſh* Doctors been pleaſed to expreſs themſelves more clearly, there would have been no wrangling about the Terms. We acknowledg, that the Acts of Religion are not all of the ſame Weight and Importance. The *firſt* are thoſe that are call'd *Elicite* and *Immediate*, which are referred only to God. The *ſecond* are grounded upon the reference or relation which certain Things and Perſons have to Religion. In this Rank we place the reverence due to Paſtors, to Churches, Holy Veſſels, to the Elements of the Sacraments, to Saints, to Angels, to the bleſſed Mother of God; That is, That there are ſome Degrees of reſpect due to each of

theſe, in proportion to the Rank which they hold in Religion, and to the Account which God makes of them. The laſt Sorts of Religious Acts are thoſe that are commanded by Religion it ſelf, as for Example, the Submiſſion and Honour we owe to Parents and Magiſtrates. But if theſe Controverſies were fairly manag'd, all the Diſpute would be about the firſt Sort of theſe Acts of Religion, which are call'd in the Language of the Schools, *Elicite* and *Immediate*, and ſuch as God reſerves peculiarly to himſelf, with excluſion of the nobleſt and moſt exalted Rank of Created Beings, ſuch, for inſtance, as *Invocation*, *Pſal.* 50. *v.* 15 *Truſt and Affiance Jer.* 17. *v.* 17. *Vows*, *Iſa.* 19. *v.* 21. *Worſhip*, *Sacrifice and Adoration*, *Exod.* 20. *v.* 50. *Act.* 10. *v.* 26. *Apocal.* 19. *verſ.* 10. Theſe are the Acts of Religion which we accuſe the *Roman* Church of giving to the Saints. Thoſe amongſt them who pretended to devotion, make Vows to the Saints upon every occaſion, though St. *Thomas* hath ſaid, that a Vow is an Act of *Latria*. But however this be, the Equivocal Senſe of the term Adoration, can do them no ſervice, where they are accuſed of paying a Religious Worſhip to Suppoſitious Saints, ſuch as *St. Chriſtopher*, *St. Longine*, *St. Catharine*, the eleven thouſand Virgins, and the Souldiers of the *Theb.* Legion. They cannot pretend that they pay theſe Saints only a Worſhip of *Dulia*, & Honours much inferior to the Supream. They ought therefore to confeſs that they have erred, and do ſtill perſiſt in their error.

Fifthly, the *Roman* Church ſpeaking by the Mouth of the Biſhop of *Meaux*, ſaith, that ſhe

inſtructeth her Children to make a great deal of difference between the affections that accompany the Prayers they make to Saints, and the Zeal, Piety, and profound Humility they ought to be poſſeſſed with, when they direct their Devotions immediately to God himſelf. But to this have not we juſt reaſon to reply, that God alone knows the Affections of the Heart, and that we cannot judge of them but by Mens Words and Actions? We don't pretend to uſurp the Prerogative of God, and ſhould be very unwilling to paſs a raſh Judgment upon Men. *Moſes* hath taught us, that *ſecret things belong to the Lord our God*; and Chriſt hath told us, that *we ſhall know Men by their Fruits*; that is, by their Words and Actions. This way of paſſing Judgment upon Mens Hearts, is ſo common a notion, and ſo univerſal a Principle, that all Men in the World do follow it in the judgments they make of others. So that it is very unjuſtly done by thoſe of the *French* Clergy, who accuſe us of calumny in finding fault with their Church for its paying to Saints a prohibited Worſhip, ſince our Accuſation is founded upon their Words and Actions. For let them ſay what they pleaſe, that they do not form the ſame Idea of the Saints, as they do of an Infinite and Supream Being, and that their Prayers to God are accompanied with Affections far more lively, ardent and humble, than thoſe they addreſs to the Saints: This is known to none but God, and diſcernable only by his all-ſeeing Eye. And all that we ſee and hear of their Performance towards

Acts of the French *Clergy of* 1685, *Artic.* 6.

towards the Saints, as Prayers, Temples, Feſtivals, Illuminations, Burning of Incenſe, Proceſſions, Proſtrations; all theſe things, I ſay, are the proper and formal Characters of the Supream Worſhip, which God hath in a peculiar manner reſerved to himſelf. Are we then in the wrong, to conclude that they carry the honours they render to the Saints too far? The *Janſeniſts* in that Book of theirs, intituled the imaginary Hereſie, charged the *Jeſuites* with making the Pope a God by their Tenet, that the Pope is infallible, becauſe Infallibility is a property belonging only to God. But we have yet more reaſon to reproach the *Roman* Church for dealing with Saints as if they were Gods, not only upon account of the external Worſhip ſhe pays to them, but alſo becauſe of the good things ſhe asks of them, which ſuppoſe that they know the Hearts of Men, are preſent every where, and have an unlimited power; all which, are Properties belonging only to the Supream being. But after all, ſuppoſe it ſhould be true, that the *Romiſh* Church puts a great difference between the Thoughts that accompany the Prayers to God, and thoſe addreſſed to the Saints, we leave every wiſe Man to conſider, whether this diſtinction in the Thoughts, does not raiſe in the Mind troubleſome Scruples, and hinder its due application and adherence to God. Theſe Theological Principles leave one always unquiet and uneaſie, for fear of going beyond, or ſtopping ſhort of the Mark. Thus far in their Opinion the Worſhip is lawful and right, but to go ever ſo little

further, is Idolatry. When thoſe who repeat after the Prieſt the Confeſſion of Sins at the beginning of the Maſs, hear him ſay, *I confeſs to God Almighty*, they muſt mind to do an Act of *Latria*, but when he adds, *and to the Bleſſed Virgin*, they muſt take care to deſcend lower to *Hyperdulia*, and when he goes on ſaying, *to the Angels, and to the Saints, to the Holy Apoſtles*, Peter *and* Paul, *&c.* it would be a Crime, ſhould they offer to them any of the Two former kinds of Worſhip; and therefore they muſt paſs to that of *Dulia*. If an Image be preſented to them, they are to offer but a relative honour to it; but let it be a little piece of the true Croſs, they may go as far as the indirect *Latria*. And becauſe theſe different Worſhips are often mix'd in the ſame Service and Litanies, we leave it again to Wiſe Men to conſider, whether all thoſe who are preſent at theſe Church-Services, have in that inſtant of time all theſe diſtinctions preſent in their Minds; whether they be all capable of theſe nice and refined ſubtilties of the Schools; and whether all this be proper to raiſe the heart, and to inflame true piety. At leaſt, our Religion hath this advantage above theirs, that God alone being propoſed to us as the Object of our Worſhip and Prayers, we need not buſie our Minds about any of theſe Diſtinctions; no ſcruple ariſes to diſturb our Zeal, we embrace the Divine Object with all our Heart, and with all our Soul, free from fears and danger of running beyond the Mark. But after all, this difference of

Thoughts

Thoughts in their Prayers, will do them no Service, as to the worſhip which they render to Saints that never exiſted, ſuch as St. *Chriſtopher*, St. *Catharine*, the Eleven Thouſand Virgins, and the Souldiers of the *Thebean* Legion. Theſe being mere *Chimeras* and groundleſs fancies, which deſerve not any the leaſt reſpect; they who pay any ſort of Religious Worſhip to them, ought to confeſs, that they have been, and are, yet in Error.

The *Sixth* Subterfuge of the *Roman* Church is, that they make great difference between Chriſt's Mediation, and that of the Saints. For, ſay they, Chriſt is a Mediator of Redemption, and the Saints are only Mediators of Interceſſion. But in anſwer to this, all the Functions of the Mediator of Redemption, may be reduced to theſe Three principal ones. Firſt, Chriſt hath taught Men the true and only way that leadeth to Heaven, *having brought Life and Immortality to light, through the Goſpel.* 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. Secondly, Chriſt by his Death, hath reconciled God to Men, and the Merits of his Croſs, are the ſource of their Peace and Righteouſneſs, *God having made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we ſhould be the Righteouſneſs of God in him.* 2 *Cor.* 5. v. 21. In the Third Place, Chriſt is the Diſpenſer of all thoſe good things which are the effects and conſequences of that eternal and new Covenant which he hath brought into the World, and ſealed with his own Blood upon the Croſs, *all power being given him, both in Heaven and Earth, that he might ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him.* *Heb.* 7. 25. Now we think we have

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great reaſon to accuſe the *Roman* Church, of attributing to the Saints theſe Functions of the High Prieſt of the New Covenant. For as if the Goſpel were not a ſufficient Rule to direct us the way to Heaven, the *Romiſh* Church teaches, that her Dominicks, *Francis*'s, *Loyola*'s, &c. have received from Heaven, Rules more certain and powerful to raiſe thoſe who follow them to a higher Perfection, than thoſe of the Goſpel it ſelf. And for the proof hereof, they produce the Heavenly Viſions, Divine Apparitions, and other Miracles wherewith they pretend God hath honoured the calling of theſe Founders of Orders. Moreover, the *Romiſh* Church holds, that by Chriſt's Death, only our Mortal Sins, and the eternal puniſhment due to them were expiated; ſo that Men muſt have recourſe to other ways of Expiation, both for their Venial Sins, and the temporal Puniſhments due to their Mortal ones. Therefore was Purgatory invented; and to that purpoſe are likewiſe applied the Faſts, the diſciplining Whips, the Obits or Offices for the Dead, the pious Foundations, the Maſſes, and the Canonical Penances injoyned by the Confeſſors at the Tribunal of Penitence (as they call it.) But the moſt powerful Machine, is the Treaſury of Indulgences, that Treaſury which hath drawn ſo much Money into the Pope's Exchequer, and which, they ſay, is filled up with the Overplus of the Satisfactions and Merits of Saints; which ſuperabundance is by Indulgences applied either for the expiation of Venial Sins, or for a compenſation for the temporal Penalties due to

Mortal

Mortal Sins. This is the ground of that Prayer which the Prieſt ſaith in the Maſs, when he asks of God the forgiveneſs of Sins, by the Merits of thoſe Saints whoſe Reliques are at reſt under the Altar. Finally, the *Roman* Church makes her Addreſſes to the Saints, as to the Diſpenſers of Heavenly Graces; and we might obſerve a Hundred Places in their Prayer-Books, Rituals, Breviaries, and other Books of their Religion, where it plainly appears, that they ask of them the forgiveneſs of Sins, the Grace of Perſeverance, and good Diſpoſitions for Dying well. But here perhaps it may be objected, that the Church of *Rome* makes a great difference in its Practice, between Chriſt's Mediation, and that of the Saints; which is ſo far from being true, that one of her moſt famous Writers, ſadly complains, *that it is evident, that moſt of the People put more truſt in the Interceſſion of the Saints, than in Chriſt's Interceſſion; and that they have recourſe with more zeal to their Protection, than to the Patronage of that great Redeemer.* And after all, this diſtinction of Mediator of Redemption, and Mediator of Interceſſion, is very injurious to Chriſt, and to the fulneſs of his Prieſthood. The Apoſtle willing to condemn the partialities of the *Corinthians*, ſome ſaying they were of *Paul*, and others of *Cephas*, asked them with indignation, *Have* Paul, Apollos *or* Cephas, *been Crucified for you?* And may not we then with more reaſon, ask the Doctors of the *Romiſh* Church, have *Francis*, *Dominick*, or *Ignatius Loyola*, been Crucified for you? For Chriſt's Prieſthood comprehends

Alexand. *Al. queſt.* 93. *num.* 1. *Artic.* 4.

1 *Cor.* 1. 13.

hends two parts, namely Sacrifice and Interceſſion, one upon the Earth, and the other in Heaven, one on the Croſs, and the other beyond the Vail in the true and incorruptible Sanctuary, that's to ſay, that his Interceſſion is nothing but a continuation of his Prieſthood; and that the reaſon why he is our Advocate, is, becauſe he was crucifi'd for us. But in what order of Mediators can the *Romiſh* Church put *St. Chriſtopher*, *St. Longine*, *St. Catharine*, the eleven thouſand Virgins, and the *Thebean* Souldiers, ſince it is plain, that at the beſt they are nothing but meer figments? They will not ſure offer to own them Mediators of Interceſſion, and therefore they muſt confeſs that they have erred, and are ſtill in error.

The Seventh device of the Church of *Rome* to excuſe the Worſhip they render to Saints, is, That they would fain perſwade us, That the Council of *Trent* hath not determined this Worſhip to be neceſſary, but only ſimply declared, that it was a good and profitable practice. To which it will ſuffice to oppoſe this Argument. That Practice muſt needs be held neceſſary to Salvation for the not obſerving of which People are declared to be damned: Now it is evident, that the Church of *Rome* damns all thoſe who believe that Saints ought not to be prayed to, from whence it ought to be inferr'd, that the Worſhip of Saints, is, according to the Principles of the *Roman* Church a practice neceſſary to Salvation. The proof for the Minor of this Argument is found in the 25th Seſſion of the Council of *Trent*, where is a Canon that Anathematizeth all thoſe who deny the lawfulneſs of calling upon Saints con-

conformably to the uſe and practice of the *Roman* Church: Unleſs they would ſay, that the Council of *Trent* did pronounce theſe Anathemas, notwithſtanding, they were of Opinion that the worſhiping of Saints is not a practice neceſſary to Salvation. But while they go about to ſet off the Wiſdom of the Fathers aſſembled in that Council, they are not aware, that they accuſe them both of Levity, and want of Charity in damning Men, for things that may be either done or let alone without prejudice to Salvation. The Doctors of the Church are hardly put to it to know what things the Council of *Trent* hath judged Ceremonial, and what Dogmatical and Eſſential to Religion. That which gives occaſion to theſe Diſputes is, That in ſome States that ſubmitted to the Pope's Authority, the Deciſions of the Council of *Trent*, have been recieved as to the Dogmatical part of Religion, though they will not acknowledge them as to Rites and Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline. I ſhall obſerve by the by, that the Illuſtrious *Peter de Marca*, frequently lays it down as a certain Truth, That *France* approved of and received the Council of *Trent* in the year 79 of the laſt Age. However, we find in the Hiſtory of the Cardinal Duke of *Joyeuſe*, compos'd by *Haberi*, a Bareſter at the Parliament of *Paris*, a Brief of Pope *Paul* the V. ſent to the Cardinal of *Joyeuſe* Biſhop of *Oſtia*, above five and fourty Years after the time when Mounſ. *de Marca* ſaith, That *France* received the Council of *Trent*, wherein this Pope complains very bitterly of the refuſal, which they ſtill made in *France* to approve this

this Council, and to ſubmit to its Deciſions. Whatſoever it is, moſt of the Doctors of the *Romiſh* Church do agree, that to know the difference which the Council of *Trent* hath put between things dogmatical, pertaining to Religion, and things meerly ritual and belonging to Diſcipline, the moſt certain Rule to judge by, is the Anathemas that are faſten'd on them. And therefore, ſince that Council hath Anathematiz'd all thoſe who do not approve the Worſhip of Saints, it follows, that the Fathers of that Council did look upon this Worſhip as a thing of great moment and neceſſity in Religion, and not as one of thoſe Practices and Ceremonies, which though they be allowed to be very good and profitable, yet may be left out or changed at the will and pleaſure of the Pope and Church. But let them ſay what they pleaſe, certain it is that the *Romiſh* Church does not only believe, that it is neceſſary to Salvation to call upon Saints, but is moreover bound to believe ſo. And their Doctors pretend, that this piece of ſervice to Saints is commanded in the Scripture, wreſting I know not how many Texts to make them apparently comply with their fancy, and utter what they would be at. Now if we believe, that God hath commanded a Worſhip, there is no doubt but we ought alſo to believe that we cannot omit the peformance thereof, without puting our Salvation to ſtake. But what can they ſay for thoſe Services that are eſtabliſhed in ſo many places to the honour of ſuch Saints, as owe all their being to the forgeries of a parcel of Monks, and the credulity of

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a deluded People? Whereas inſtead of declaring theſe Practices to be neceſſary, the Church of *Rome* ought to acknowlege that they fall ſhort of being even good and profitable. And therefore that Church muſt confeſs that it hath erred, and is yet involved in error.

The *Eight* Shift is that of ſome Doctors of the *Romiſh* Church, who do deplore the exceſs that the Worſhiping of Saints is grown to, and proteſt altogether, that if in ſome places ſome Saints that never were are Worſhiped, they are but local practices tolerated, though not approved by the Church. This is the Rock on which do ſplit every day the Learning, Piety, Knowledge and Conſcience of many Eccleſiaſticks in the Church of *Rome*, who being deſirous of Salvation and having made a conſiderable ſtudy in Religion, yet comparing the miſchief of that falſe Worſhip, with the conſequences of a Separation, think it much ſafer for their Souls to live in a corrupted Church, and to groan under its Errors, than to make a breach of Charity by ſeparating from its Communion. In which they are like thoſe cowardly and unworthy Citizens, who while a generous Deliverer hazards his Fortune and his Life, to preſerve to them both their Laws and Country, are content with folded Arms to wiſh him good ſucceſs and proſperity; and if he chances to fail in the attempt, will alſo bewail and pity him. Of which ſort of People a great Man uſed to ſay, that they were the moſt uſeleſs of all Friends, for that having the Vertue of wiſhing us well, and ſhedding ſome *The Duke of Rohan.*

tears

tears for us, they had not yet courage enough to afford us their Assistance. For indeed all these good Wishes and Lamentations are no remedy to the misfortunes of a Church or Country. Works they are and honest endeavours which God requires at our hands, and not timorous Wishes and unprofitable Vows. If some of the *Romish* Party do sigh at the sight of a Worship, which they think dishonourable to their Church, why do they not likewise joyn with those who apply themselves to reform it? I believe there are but few very amongst them who have not heard of the wholsom Advices of the Blessed Virgin *Mary* to her Indiscreet Votaries, and of the Pastoral Letter which a Bishop of *France* adjoyn'd thereto, recommending them to the perusal and practice of all the good Christians of his Dioceſs. This was just the time, and a fair occasion for those Doctors, who bewail so much in private the Abuses of their Church, to appear and to speak, had not some unworthy considerations stop'd them in the way, and made them Speechless. The Prelates, the Universities, *Rome* it self condemned those wholesom Advices, no body having Piety and Courage enough to defend them, while Error and Falshood found a World of Zealous Protectors. *Crasset* a Jesuite stood in the defence of all the Excesses of the *Bonaventures* and *Bernardines*: And the *Sorbonne* by giving their Approbation to his Works, condemned likewise both the wholesom Advices, and the pastoral Letter of the Bishop of *Tournay*. How can they say then, that most of those things

The Bishop of Tournay.

things, which we find fault with in the Church of *Rome*, are but local Practices, or Exceſſes only tolerated, and not approved by the Church? Thoſe very things which we diſallow, are of ſuch a nature, that a bare toleration of them, hath the force of an Approbation. For they are not Dogmatical Errours, nor empty Speculations, but Errours in the Practice, and Falſe worſhip, in the publick Service of Religion: Which, whenever a Chriſtian Society does tolerate, it gives thereby a ſufficient ground to believe, that it approves them likewiſe. Yet had not all our juſt Complaints upon this matter, power enough to induce the Commiſſioners of the *Index Expurgatorius*, to expunge the ſcandalous Exceſſes of their *Bonaventure*, *Bernardine* of *Siena*, and *Gabriel Biel*. The Congregation of the *Holy Office*, and that *de Ritibus*, are very well informed of the Honours paid in divers Places to the Souldiers of the *Thebean* Legion. But let the Proteſtants prove as clear as the Day, the Forgery of their Martyrdom, theſe imaginary Beings, conſecrated by a blind Superſtition, are permitted notwithſtanding ſtill to retain all the Deferences of Honour and Worſhip formerly paid to them.

A Ninth evaſion of the *Romiſh* Party is, that we cannot, they ſay, condemn their worſhipping of Saints, without involving both the Fathers, the Church of the firſt Ages, and the moſt ancient Chriſtians in the ſame Condemnation. But this Accuſation which they enter againſt us with ſo much confidence, is wholly groundleſs The truth is, that in the times of St. *Baſil*, St. *Chry-*

ſoſtom and *Gregory Nazianzen* in the East, of St. *Ambroſe*, St. *Jerom*, St. *Auſtin* and St. *Paulinus* in the Weſt, ſome Practices may be obſerved which have been in the After-Ages the Origine of the falſe Worſhip paid to the Saints. The People beginning then to eſteem a little too much of their Reliques, they flock'd from all parts to their Sepulchers, and with an extraordinary zeal, they celebrated the memorial of them; the Preachers in the mean time, by Rhetorical Figures, directing their Speech to them in ſuch manner, as if they had been actually alive. But however the Veneration they had then for them, came nothing near to the Worſhip which the Romiſh Church pays to them now adays. *Gregory* the Firſt, who died in the Seventh Century, began in his time to innovate in the publick Worſhip of the Church, by inſerting in the Litanies, the Name of the Bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, thoſe of the Saints having not been introduced till a long time after. And we defy the Doctors of the Church of *Rome* to ſhew us, that the Worſhip which they render to Saints, is mentioned in any of the Eccleſiaſtical Writers, who lived before the Year of our Lord 350. *Martin Perez Hiala*, Biſhop of *Cadiz*, confeſſes, that they cannot juſtify by ancient authority, the Invocation and Interceſſion of Saints, before the time of *Cornelius*, who lived towards the end of the Third Century. And this good Prelate would have deſcended yet a Hundred Years lower, had he ſeen the Reaſons which *Blondel* alledges, to prove that that which is cited of *Cornelius* is meerly ſpurious.

Perez *de Trad. part.* 3. *conſ.* 7. *pag.* 197.

Blondel *in Epiſt. Pontif. pag.* 308.

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Had the Invocation of Saints been in uſe in the times of St. *Athanaſius*, and St. *Hilary*, we muſt confeſs that the *Arrians* had but very little wit, when it being objected, as it was by theſe Fathers to them, that they were down-right Idolaters, in praying as they did to Chriſt, whom they thought to be but a Creature; they did not reply that this Accuſation ought to rebound on their Adverſaries alſo, ſince notwithſtanding they did not believe their Saints to be Gods, yet they made Prayers and Supplications to them But how is it poſſible to believe, that in thoſe firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, the Chriſtians made their Addreſſes to the deceaſed Saints, ſeeing they were of Opinion, that the Souls of the Faithful did not enjoy the Beatifick Viſion before the general Reſurrection of the Dead. If we ask Cardinal *Bellarmine* why the Saints were not invoked under the Old Teſtament, he anſwers, Becauſe the Souls of the Juſt were then in *Limbo*, and did not yet behold the Face of God. For which very Reaſon, we may likewiſe conclude, that the Chriſtians of the firſt Ages did not pray to Saints, ſince they believed that their Souls were not to be admitted into the preſence of God till the General Reſurrection. Which Opinion of theirs, hath forced Cardinal *Richlieu* to make this Confeſſion, *That ſeveral Fathers in the Firſt Ages, held for certain, that the Souls of the Faithful deceaſed in the Grace of God (thoſe of Martyrs only excepted) ſhould not enjoy the Beatifick Viſion, till after the Reſurrection of the Dead; and therefore 'its no wonder, that they ſpoke in thoſe times, of the Veneration and*

Athan. *Epiſt. ad Adelph.* 2. *contr. Arr.* Hilar. *de Trinit. lib.* 8. & 12.

Bellarm. *de Beat. Sanct. lib.* 1. *c.* 19.

Richlieu *Tract. Conver. lib.* 3. *c.* 4.

Invocation of Saints, with more caution and wariness, than it hath been done since it hath been commonly believed, that the Souls of the Faithful who have departed this Life in the fear of God, did not wait till the Resurrection for the enjoyment of the Beatifick Vision. In the Church of the first Ages, they observed another Practice inconsistent with that Worship, which the present Church of *Rome* renders to the Saints. For now a days, the Living Pray to the Dead, whereas, formerly the Living pray'd for them. Cardinal *Richelieu* (as you have seen in the place above quoted) hath excepted the Martyrs from the general Rule; but in this case there was no exception made of any; for according to the Liturgy ascrib'd to St. *Mark*, the Christians us'd to say.

Remember O Lord Our Ancestors the Patriarcks, the Prophets, the Martyrs, and all the Spirits who are perfect in the Faith of Jesus Christ, *and grant that their Souls may rest in the Sanctuary of thy Saints.*

Bibl. Patr Gr. Lat. 2. Pag. 17.

This practice of praying for all the Saints, was yet in use in *Hinkmar's* time. And in the Rubrick upon the Decretals at the Title of the Celebration of Masses, *ch. 6. sect. Oratio quæ dicitur*, &c. we find this curious Remark in the Gloss on the Margent. It was formerly said, *Grant O Lord that this Prayer may be profitable to the Soul of thy Servant* Leo: *But now it is said, Grant that this Prayer may be profitable to us by the Intercession of thy Servant* Leo.

Dicebatur olim annue nobis Domine ut animæ famuli tui Leonis hæc prosit Oratio. Hodie autem dicitur ut Intercessione Patri Leonis hæc nobis prosit Oratio.

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So little diſtinction was made in thoſe times between the Martyrs and the Saints of the firſt Order, That they uſed to pray even for the Bleſſed Mother of God. For in the Liturgy attributed to *St. Chryſoſtom*, we find theſe Words: *Let us pray to the Lord, for all thoſe who have heretofore adminiſtred and fulfilled the Duties of Prieſthood, for the eternal remiſſion of their Sins, and for the memory of all thoſe who are deceaſed, in hope of the Reſurrection. Forgive them O Merciful Lord. And we offer alſo this reaſonable Service unto thee for our Anceſtors who reſt in the Faith, the Fathers, the Patriarhs, the Prophets, the Apoſtles, the Martyrs, and eſpecially for the moſt Bleſſed and Immaculate* Mary. After this do ye think it well done of the *Romaniſts* to accuſe us of condemning the Primitive Church, and all the Ancient Fathers, becauſe we condemn the Worſhip which they pay in our days to the Saints? Certain it is that in this we don't condemn *Origen*, who wrote thus againſt *Celſus*. *We ought not to pray to Creatures, who have as much need to make Prayers and Supplications for themſelves, and do therefore rather by their calling upon him, admoniſh us to make our addreſſes to God only, and not to debaſe our ſelves before them by dividing between God and them the honour of Prayer, God forbid that we ſhould follow* Celſus's *advice, who would have us to pray to Angels. We ought to pray to none but God, who is the Paramount Lord of all things. We do not condemn St.* Auſtin, who ſaith, *That were St.* Paul *and the other Apoſtles our Mediators, we ſhould have many of them, but then the Apoſtle*

Bibl. pp. t. 9. tom. 2. p. 62.

Origen. contra Celſ. Tit. 8. & 5.

Auguſt. contra Epiſ. 1. Parm. lib. 2. cap. 8.

Apoſtle had not been in the right who ſaith, that there is but one God and one Mediator between God and Man who is Jeſus Chriſt. And he declares in another place: *That in offering the Sacrifice, mention was made of the Martyrs, as of Men of God, who by the Confeſſion of his Name, had triumphed over the World, but that they were not invocated.* We don't condemn *Ignatius*, a Diſciple of the Apoſtles, who recommended this to the Chriſtians, *to have none before their Eyes when they pray but Chriſt Jeſus and his Father.* We do not condemn St. *Irenæus*, that Holy Biſhop of *Lions*, who had framed himſelf both upon the Leſſons and Examples of *Polycarp*, and who ſaith, *That the Church does not mix in her Service either the Invocation of Angels, or any other criminal Curioſity, but does direct her Prayers meerly, purely and openly to God, the maker of all things, by calling upon the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* We do not condemn *Tertullian*, who giving an Account of the Faith and Hope of the Chriſtians, before the *Roman* Emperors, ſaith. *That they do Invocate none but the true God and do pray for the proſperity of the Emperor, but that they ask it of him whom they know alone to be able to grant it.* Nor do we condemn *Lactantius* who declares, *That thoſe who pray to deceaſed Saints, do Sin both againſt Reaſon and Piety, revolt againſt God, break all ſorts of Laws, and in Worſhipping dead Men, do commit an unpardonable Fault.* But if the *Romiſh* Church, does ſide with thoſe Ancient Hereticks, who, as *Theodoret* informs us, held, *That whoſoever will have a free Acceſs to God, ought firſt to endeavour to ſecure to himſelf*

Aug. *de Civit. Dei. lib.* 22. *c.* 19.

Iren. *lib.* 2. *cap.* 57.

Tertul. *Apol. cap.* 17. & 30.

Theodoret. *in Ceſſ.* 2. 18. & 3. 7.

ſelf the Favour of Angels; and if we find fault with that Church for doing the ſame, we leave it to our Readers to examin, whether we do condemn alſo that Ancient Doctor, who anſwered theſe Hereticks, *That it is but a pitiful ſubterfuge to ſay, that we make our addreſſes to the Creatures, only upon the account of making by their means our Approaches to God, as they are us'd to do, who deſire to be introduced to the King, by making firſt their Application to his Officers. True it is, that to be admitted to the audience of a King, and to be promoted by him, it is neceſſary firſt to ſpeak to and court thoſe who do attend him, becauſe a King being but a Man cannot of himſelf know whom to truſt with the adminiſtration of his Affairs, but as he receives information from thoſe that are about him. But that we may approach God, who is Omniſcient, there is no need of imploring the Patronage of Men. It is enough, if we have a ſincere and upright heart, and a religious mind; for God will anſwer in any place of the Univerſe whoſoever ſpeaks to him in that holy diſpoſition.* How unjuſtly then are we condemned by the *Romaniſts*, for holding Opinions contrary to thoſe of the Ancient Church concerning the Saints, ſince in conformity to that Church of the firſt Ages, we do not addreſs our Prayers to any but God through Jeſus Chriſt. We do, as ſhe did, honour the Saints, and reverence their memory, we propoſe their Examples to our Imitation, we applaud their Triumph, and do Crown them with praiſe. μίμησις Imitation, Ἔυφημία Praiſe, ἀγάπη Love, ἀνάμνησις Commemoration, were

all the duties which the Piety of the Primitive Christians pay'd to the Saints. And if we do restrain our selves within the same bounds, we have for us the most Authentick Acts of Antiquity as the 34. and 57. *Epistles* of St. *Cyprian*, wherein this blessed Martyr speaks of the Commemoration which the Church made of Martyrs; and the 3. *ch.* of the Book *Corona militis* by *Tertullian*, in which are mentioned the Oblations which in those times were offered for the dead, especially for Relations and Friends: But chiefly we have on our side the Declaration of the Ancient Church of *Smyrna* concern-
Euseb. *lib.* 4. *cap.* 25. ing St. *Polycarp's* Body, related by *Eusebius*, and in the Acts of this Blessed Martyr Printed by *Usserius*, and which are quoted by Mr. *de Valois* in his Notes. It is a very memorable Fact, and which happened about the year of Our Lord 167, and is as follows: The *Jews* being unwilling that the Christians should have the comfort of burying their *Polycarp*, represented to the Pagan Magistrates, that if the Christians were permitted to keep the Body of that Holy Martyr, they would soon forsake their Master to serve his Disciple, *not knowing*, said the whole Church of *Smyrna*, *That it is impossible we should leave Christ who hath suffered for the Redemption of all those who are saved through the whole World, and that we should pay a religious Worship, or address our Prayers to any other but him. For as to Christ, we adore him as being the Son of God, whereas we love the Martyrs as the Disciples and Imitators of the Lord. And certainly this is nothing*

but

but what is very juſt, conſidering the Zeal and fervent Love they had for their own King and Maſter. God grant that we may ſo imitate their Piety, that we may be partakers of their Glory. Which diſcourſe of the Church of *Smyrna*, as it is our Apology, ſo it is a condemnation of the Worſhip which the *Romiſh* Church renders now a days to Saints. And if the Ancient Church ſpeaks thus of true Martyrs, we may eaſily judge how it would have behaved it ſelf towards falſe and ſuppoſititious ones, ſuch as are the Souldiers of the *Theb. Legion.*

Tenthly, Father *Malbranche* is without contradiction, one of the greateſt Wits of our Age, did he not too much affect to be an Original. His Syſtem concerning the Worſhip of Saints, and the way he takes to defend the Practice of his Church is as follows. *Firſt*, he lays down for a Foundation, that all our good things come from God, and that he is the only cauſe and diſpenſer of them. *Secondly*, He ſaith, That when we receive from him any thing that is good, Chriſt is the occaſional Cauſe thereof, God by an Eternal Law having decreed not to communicate any Good to Mankind, but at Chriſt's Deſire and Requeſt. Which Tenet of his is ſet forth more largely both in his Chriſtian Meditations, and his Treatiſe of Nature and Grace. *Thirdly*, He declares, That it is not in the Power of the Saints to impart any of theſe Goods unto us, and that we ought not ſo much as to ſay, That they are the occaſional Cauſes of them, it being a Privilege, that belongs to none but Chriſt, as he is the Mediator

Malbranche *Moral.* c. 9. *pag.* 156.

diator of the New Covenant, and the High Priest of Things Eternal. It is at the Desire of Christ, and not at those of the Saints, that God by an Eternal Law hath bound himself to communicate his Graces. *Fourthly*, Nevertheless he adds, that the Saints do excite and incline the Desires of Christ toward us, in which chiefly he makes the force of their Intercession to consist. *Fifthly*, and lastly, He believes, that they have the Power to heal Sicknesses, and to bless with fertility our Fields, because the Order of the Universe seems to require, that inferior things be made Subject to the Power of the Superior Beings. I know not how Father *Malbranche*, with all the Sagacity and Sharpness of his Wit, can reconcile these Principles of his both with the Doctrine and Practice of his Church. For having Established in the *First*, That God is the only Dispenser of all good things, hence it follows, that the asking the Saints for Graces, which come only from the hand of God, is down-right Idolatry. And when he saith, *secondly*, That God does not dispense his Graces but at the Desire of Christ, who is established by him the Mediatour of the New Covenant, and the High-Priest of Things Eternal, and that he alone can make Intercession for us to his Father in determining and contracting by his desires the general Laws of God's Mercy to some particular Sinners, whom he hath more kindness for, we may easily conclude, that the imploring the Mediation of Saints, and asking them to pray directly and immediately to God for us, is a high Injury offered to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Now

Now as to his *third* Tenet, *viz.* That the Saints have not the Power to convey to us those Graces which we want, and that we ought not so much as to look upon them as the occasional Causes of them, if this opinion of his be true, what will become of so many Litanies and Prayers set down in the *Popish* Breviaries, and in their Prayer and Mass-Books, in which they ask the Saints to cleanse them from all their Sins, to preserve them from the Sicknesses of the Spirit, to inflame their hearts with the Fire of Charity, to deliver them from Hell-fire, to open the Gates of Heaven to them, and to make them sit on Thorns with the glorious Company of the Blessed above, *&c.* Lastly, if according to *Malbranche's fourth* and *fifth* Principles all the good Services, which the Saints are able to do, are only to move and excite Christ's desires towards us, and to give us ease in our Afflictions, or afford us a good Crop, he Asserts these last Tenets in so dubious a manner and so faintly (though upon any other matter, he uses to be very Vigorous and Positive) that it is an easy thing to discern that he himself is not very well convinced of it. 'Tis, *saith he*, The Opinion of the Church that the Saints do know all our wants. We may pray to the Saints, that they be pleased to stir up the desires and the Charity of Jesus Christ. One Saint perhaps is more in Favour, and hath more Access to Christ upon his own Holy-day than at another time, or than another Saint. It may be also that they have the power of healing our Sicknesses, or of procuring us a plentiful Year.

Missal p. 353. *and* 359. *Brev. p.* 826. *die* 18. *Jan. die* 15. *Octob. pag* 1095, *&c.*

Year. We ſee by theſe ſhy and uncertain expreſſions, how hard he is put to it to reconcile his Opinions with the Doctrine and Practice of his Church. For indeed there is a palpable incompatibility of his Principles, with that Religious Worſhip which the *Romiſh* Church pays to the Saints. And we need only to examin the Principles, which he had already laid before, *viz.* That the Church by praying to the Father through the Son, does acknowledge the Son to be equal and of one ſubſtance with the Father: For if he were not ſo, ſaith he, we could not call upon him. And likewiſe he had already ſaid, that the Father hath tyed his Bleſſings and Treaſures to Chriſt's Deſires, and that this is the Reaſon why we ought to adore the Father, and to call upon Chriſt. But what he after adds deſerves eſpecially our conſideration, namely, that theſe Deſires of Chriſt are the deſires of his human Will, that his Fleſh is the Principle of theſe Deſires, which make all the riches of the Church and the Sanctification of the Elect: And that this is the reaſon why Religion teaches us to Addreſs ſometimes our Prayers to the Father, becauſe if we never did invocate any but Chriſt, by reaſon of thoſe Priviledges which God hath by an eternal Decree adapted to his Deſire, to thoſe human deſires, he ſaith, which do proceed from the Child of the Bleſſed *Mary*, we ſhould be in danger of adhering to Chriſt as he is a Man, and of truſting in his Fleſh with the ſame kind of Love and Truſt, which we owe only to the Infinite and Soveraign Being.

We

We may eaſily perceive that this way of reaſoning is quite contrary to the Doctrine of the *Roman* Church, and to that Worſhip it renders to Saints. The Eſteem indeed, which I have for Great Men is ſuch, that I cannot forbear having alſo a kind of reſpect even for their odd fancies, and by-ways of Writing, which made me take notice by the by of Father *Malbranche* his Syſtem concerning the worſhipping of Saints, though I know in the bottom of it there is no more reality than in a ſhadow or dream. But after all, ſhould we ſuppoſe his Opinion to be not altogether groundleſs, who would venture to ſay, that ſuppoſititious Saints, ſuch as we have proved thoſe of the *Theb.* Legion to be, can move and excite Chriſts deſires? Therefore the *Roman* Church ought to confeſs, that ſhe hath erred in permitting and approving the Worſhip which is paid to them.

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